# The Saturday Review of Literature

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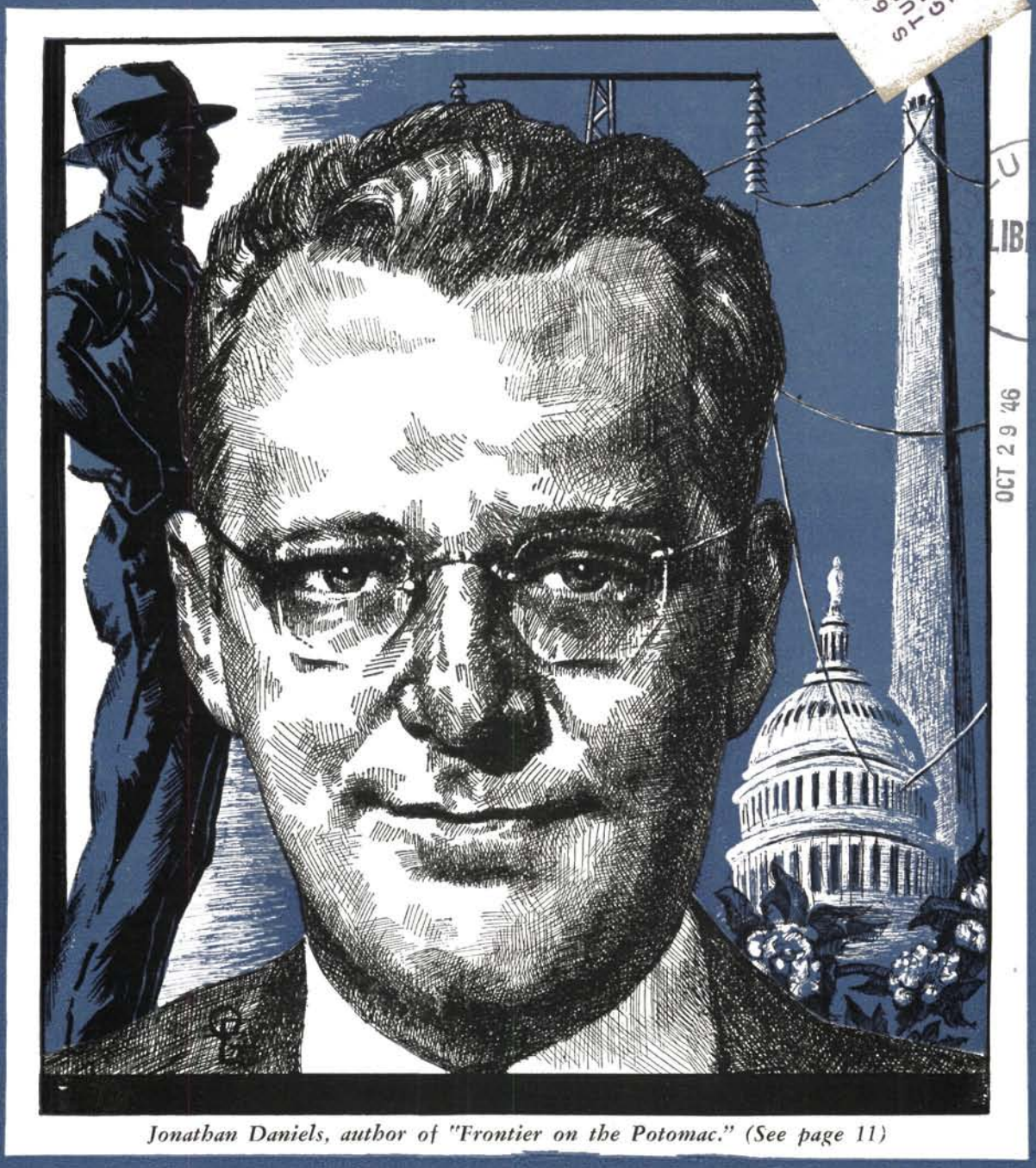


OCT 29 '46


*Jonathan Daniels, author of "Frontier on the Potomac."* *(See page 11)*

## The Anatomy of Cooperation

By JOHN E. WHARTON


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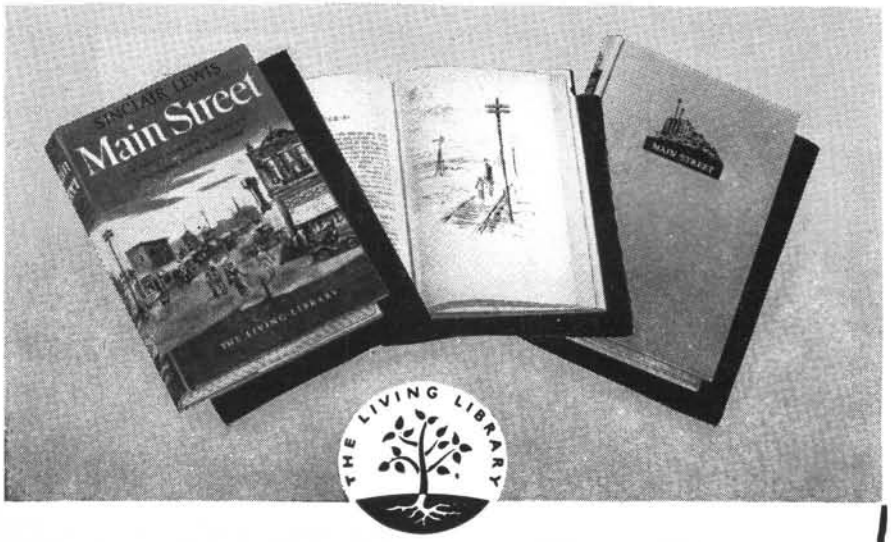


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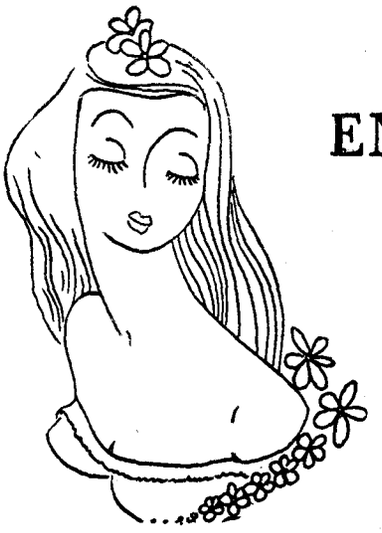

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ENID BAGNOLD

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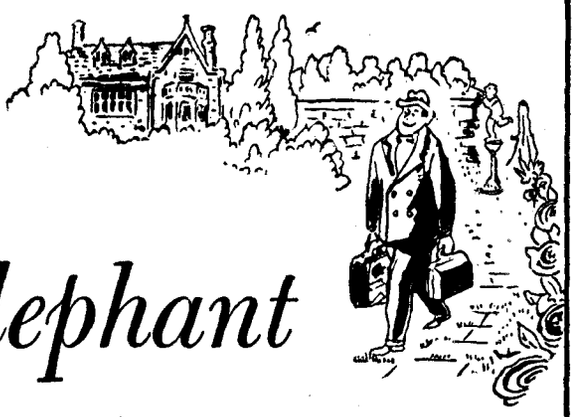

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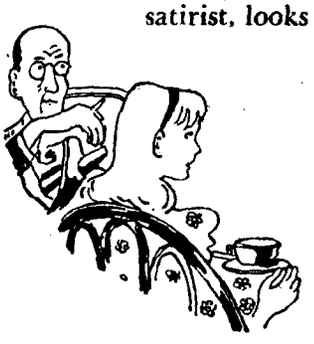

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MORROW





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# "From where I sit"

PROBABLY you still remember how the other day something which was a cross between autumn and winter came into New York on a high pressure area that WQXR had a lot of fun describing early that morning. It came in around four in the afternoon, and when I left the office, every person was leaning into its tawny wind, and every tree away. Thinking back to it I have a sort of montage picture of an electric blue gap in the slate clouds and a twitter of nylons. Everyone seemed to have a destination, and the busses cleared their throats with more than the usual vehemence. After the namby-pamby weather we had been having, this was an event.

Now why do I mention all this in a column about Doubleday books? The reason is that I believe atmosphere is very important in setting the mood for a book, and I am thinking specifically of the atmosphere PROKOSCH creates and constantly refers to in **The Idols of The Cave.** We have some pretty spectacular weather here in New York City—dawns as pale pink as milady's boudoir, pink nights, cockcading steam from the mansard fortress of the Plaza, and incidentally, a higher average wind velocity (11 mph) throughout the year than proverbial Chicago. The weather in this city is important not just to elevator men, but to everyone, and PROKOSCH does a superb job with it which sews the New York label on the silver lining of every cloud.

Not just because it is a special New York phenomenon, but because it is vital to the whole swimming portentousness of the book does PROKOSCH describe these minute changes of weather. Weather is almost as important as the characters, and in it they move toward their limited but painful destiny. The book begins: "A shadow fell; there was a sense of catastrophe. A curtain of rain was hurled over the Plaza, and a great tree of lightning shot forth over Harlem." Here in the first lines he has already set the stage. Sometimes Johnathan Ely stands in the fleeting happiness of "the sun-striped abyss of Fifth Avenue." But usually "an air of limbo shrouded the buildings; the windows and doorways looked blind and hollow."

If you read the book you will find that its excellent jacket and its title are an integral part of all this atmosphere, and so for that matter are the characters.

*paul*

DOUBLEDAY


# TRADE Winds

## VISIT TO BOSTON

**THE BOSTON OF TODAY** is a far cry from that "Athens of America" described in Ferris Greenslet's nostalgic "The Lowells and Their Seven Worlds." Then "three sides of the common were bounded by brick and mortar, where merchant princes resided; the fourth side lay open to the country, washed by the bright waters of Charles River Bay." The cheerful villages of Roxbury, Brookline, and Cambridge could be seen in the distance, "their white houses sparkling from amidst groves of green—here and there graceful spires tapering up, their vanes glittering like burnished gold." This Boston, affirmed an editor of *The Nation*, was "the one place in America where wealth and the knowledge of how to use it were apt to coincide."

The Boston of today isn't even like the Boston of the early 1920's, when Dick Simon, as he recalled in these pages a few weeks ago, first initiated me into the mysteries of the book business. The hotel where we stopped is now a Harvard dormitory. Newbury Street has surrendered to commerce. Boylston Street, opposite the common, now looks like an old lady vainly simulating youth by wearing gaudy frocks and cheap costume jewelry. Butterfield's, the first bookshop Dick and I visited, is gone, and its eighty-five-year-old proprietor recently confided to a reporter the principal reason he hoped to live another fifteen years: he "wanted to read the *Boston Herald* on his hundredth birthday"! Most of the other book buyers I met in those days are gone too—Moriarty of the Harvard Coop, Webber of Lauriat's, Pitman of Jordan Marsh—but I still get a great kick out of wandering through the narrow streets of the old town, and renewing acquaintance with the friends who are left.

Most of them turned up at the dinner of "The Bookbuilders of Boston," a unique organization of people interested in every phase of the business—printing, binding, publishing, retailing, and reviewing—that promises to reach a new high under the vigorous leadership of Austin Bailey, of the Holliston Mills. I thought for a few blissful moments that they were vibrating with excitement at the address I had prepared for them, but soon learned that the tracks of the New York, New Haven, & Hartford ran directly under the hall in which we were gathered. Introductory remarks were delivered by the *Herald's* Alice Dixon Bond, the forceful lady who is responsible for one of the most widely-observed adages in the book world today: "Give Bond what she wants immediately; it saves time." On the way out, Dale Warren of Houghton Mifflin, Ed Laycock of the *Globe*, and I obligingly posed for a photographer, who later mystified us by confiding that she represented a magazine called *Seventeen*. Dale decided it was because his shift from publicity to editorial work had made him feel forty years younger. We also met Mr. and Mrs. William Dana Orcutt, and heard a story worth repeating here.

Mr. Orcutt came home one evening from a conference with George Hecht, manager of the Doubleday retail shops. "Hecht told me," he reported to his wife with evident relish, "that in their Wall Street shop, patronized almost exclusively by men, solid, serious books outsell frothy fiction almost ten to one. In uptown branches, however, where the customers usually are women, it's the inconsequential love stories and murder tales that get the big play. Interesting commentary on the sexes, isn't it?" "Quite right," snapped Mrs. Orcutt. "You are aware, of course, that the men are buying the good books to take home to their wives, and the ladies, wise in the ways of keeping peace in the family, are acquiring the trash to give their husbands." . . .

**I FOUND IT** difficult to locate, or recognize, many old landmarks. Mrs. Wright and Mrs. Anderson have



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moved the Dartmouth Bookstall into charming headquarters across the street from the old location. Jim Braim and Bertram Taylor have transformed the Jordan Marsh book section into a dignified, handsome unit, something like the famous Bumpus quarters in London. Miss Barr and Jim Reed are gone from DeWolfe and Fiske, but the business still flourishes on the ground floor of the Houghton Mifflin building on Park Street. The shiny new quarters of the American News are in strange contrast to the musty office in which I used to cajole the cantankerous Mr. Combie. At R. H. White's, it looked for a moment as though Boston bobby-soxers all had decided to go in for literature at the same time. Investigation proved, however, that the magnet was jolting Joe Di Maggio in person, happily autographing copies of his "Lucky to Be a Yankee," a title chosen, obviously, before the 1946 season began. The Old Corner has changed least of all. A lively and efficient newcomer named Helen Rathbun has done wonders with the juvenile department, but Arthur Dragon still presides from above, hat on the back of his head, reminiscing happily—and steadily—of his youth as a clerk in Bridgman and Lyman's store in Northampton.

My first encounter with the canny Mr. Dragon I shall never forget. I was selling the publications of Boni & Liveright, and our headliner that year was a novel called "Orphan Island," by Rose Macauley, whose "Told by an Idiot" had been a big best seller the year before. "Orphan Island," to be quite frank, was no great shakes, and nobody knew it better than Horace Liveright, the publisher. He had coached me, however, to shoot for a 250 order from the Old Corner, and I pulled out every stop in a valiant endeavor to get it. Dragon, however, seemed much more interested in the toothpick he was chewing than in my dramatic recital of the plot of "Orphan Island." Finally he nodded and said, "That sounds like a prize turkey. Put us down for twenty-five." Unfortunately, I considered this disappointing order a reflection upon my salesmanship, and, even more unfortunately, a youthful failing reasserted itself: tears of anger formed in my eyes. Dragon completed my mortification by leaning over, patting me on the shoulder, and saying softly, "There, there, little boy, don't cry! We'll take fifty!" The fact that on my next visit I had to take back forty-two unsold copies for full credit did little to erase painful memories of the incident. . . .

**ONE OF THE MOST** colorful and successful booksellers today in Boston—in the whole country, in fact—is Bush


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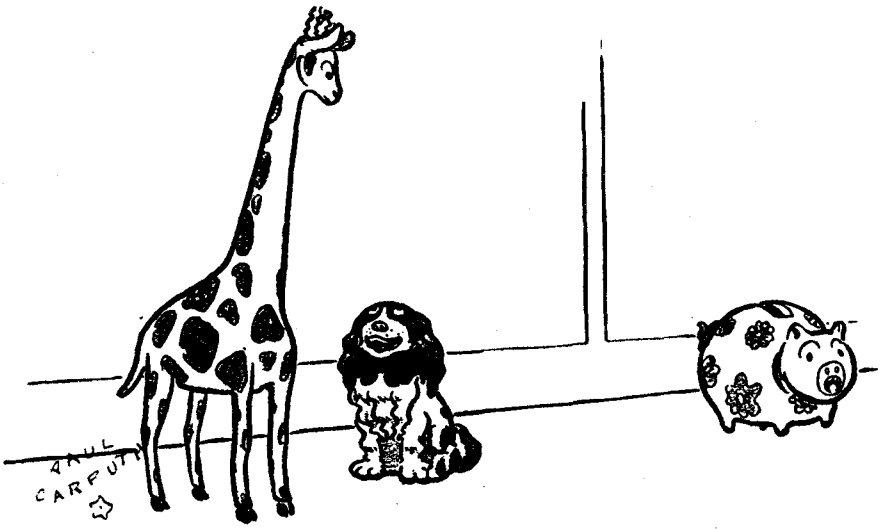


"I feel sorry for him. In spite of all his money, he never has any fun."

Campbell, whose Personal Bookshop chain now comprises seventeen branches, and is growing steadily. Bush, a graduate of Dartmouth, '15, opened his first store in a basement on Newbury Street in 1925, featuring a circulating library and "personal" service, with his brother, John C. Campbell, and Adah F. Hall, in charge. By 1936, five branches were in operation, and Bush, increasingly intrigued by the possibilities of the book business, gave up his fire-insurance agency and plunged into the fray. On the sound foundation built by Miss Hall and his brother, Bush has expanded the retail department and built up a nation-wide business with public libraries, colleges, and the United States Government. The fact that he is in direct competition with the powerful American News Company does not seem to feaze him. . . . Most active branch of the Personal chain at the moment is located at Harvard Square; a record college enrollment, including thousands of ex-GI's, is buying expensive books as if they were Hershey bars.

The manager, Margaret Kain, formerly of the University of Chicago Bookstore, reported total business on September 24 (the opening day of Harvard's fall semester) that set a new record for the chain. . . . On Charles Street two branches of the Personal face each other—and both of them are thriving. "More personal service," explained Bush. "Our customers don't even have to cross the street!". . .

**LITTLE, BROWN** and Houghton Mifflin, Boston's two mighty publishing houses, occupy fine old buildings on either side of the State House, more or less friendly rivals, watching each other like hawks. . . . At Houghton Mifflin, I found the ebullient Dorothy Hillyer, back from a triumphal tour to the Coast, babbling jubilantly over a new manuscript just turned in by Ross Lockridge, Jr. It is called "The Riddle of Raintree Country," and will not be published until 1948. Lockridge, a cousin of Mary Jane Ward, of "Snake Pit" fame, has been working on it for five years, without telling a soul what he was doing—and still has considerable polishing to do. "It's longer than 'Gone With the Wind'," said Dorothy. "And better than Tom Wolfe," added Dale Warren. . . . Diggory Venn's new assistant in the publicity department is Mary Anne Amsbary, daughter of Nat Howard, of the *Cleveland News,* and formerly aide to Bill Targ, at World. . . .

I had cocktails with Alfred McIntyre, who has forgotten more about book publishing than most of us will ever know, and received from him an advance copy of Marquand's "B.F.'s Daughter," which is headed straight for the Number One spot on the best-seller lists. Then Anne Ford arrived, and after dinner at the Ritz, still my favorite metropolitan hotel, we saw the new Kaufman-Johnson-Gershwin-Schwartz musical, "Park Avenue." This should be a great show by the time it opens in New York. . . .

Boston booksellers all reported that their sales of fiction were slumping sharply, although their total volume remained close to record levels. Aboard the "Owl," however, I read that Fox had paid $215,000, without seeing one line of the manuscript, for a ten-year lease of the picture rights to Kenneth Roberts's "Lydia Bailey" (the Literary Guild selection for January). Evidently Darryl Zanuck, at least, believes the slump is temporary. And Darryl Zanuck, I learn from a disinterested party named Spectorsky, is never wrong.

BENNETT CERF



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The first selection of his poems to be published in English is SECRET COUNTRY (Macmillan, $2.50). It contains both the original Spanish and, facing each poem, its translation by Muna Lee, a poet in her own right.

Here is what some of the reviewers have said:

"Appears to be the most interesting South American poet since Ruben Dario."—*The New Yorker*

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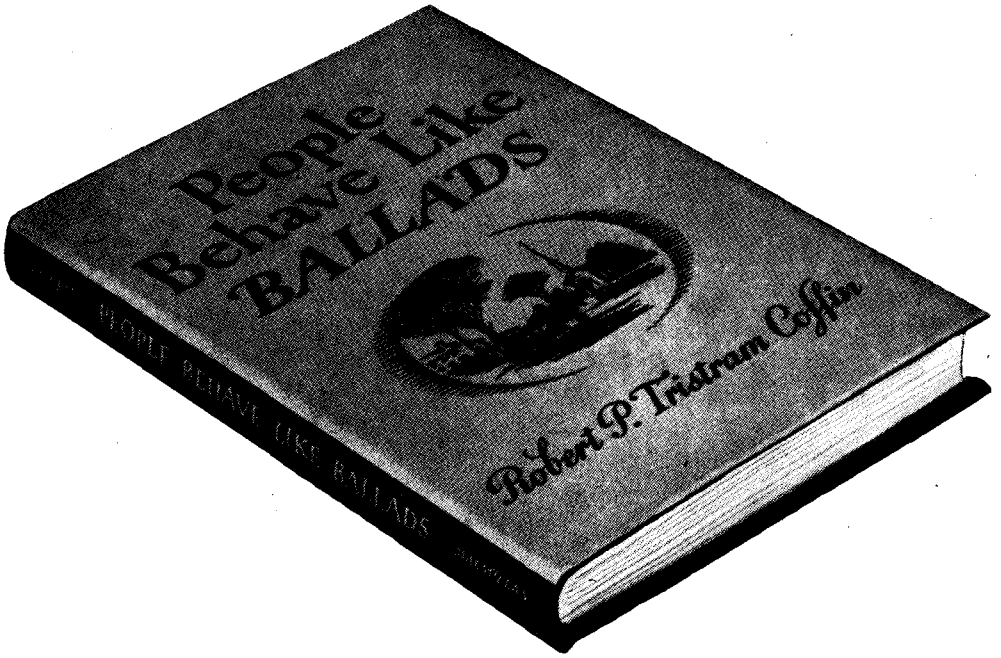


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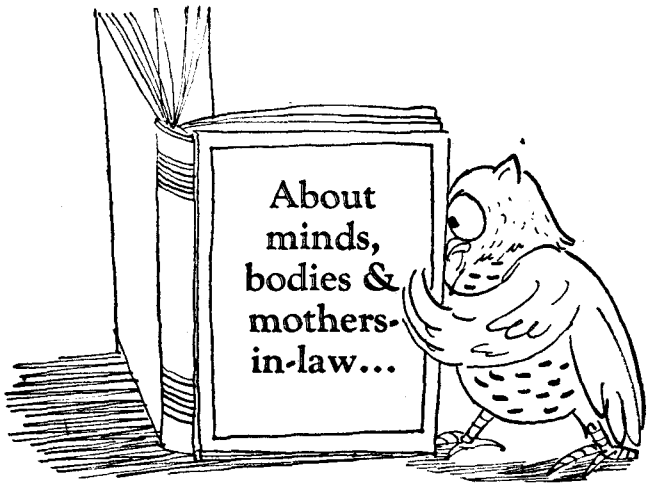


CARVED on the façade of the austere building in which we went to gym were the words *Mens sana in corpore sano*. The antiquity of that language may prove that, although psychosomatic medicine is a supposedly new field, the Romans had a phrase for it. As our education proceeded, we moved from gym to problems of Holinshed, poverty and dependency in Massachusetts, and "What Is Art?" by Leo Tolstoy. We even—may Joe forgive us—wrote a term paper on Lenin. When this jumble of feebly related topics was too much with us, a group repaired to the Hole-in-the-Wall and forgot the world in the best hamburgers and the hottest coffee in the thickest cups ever. Then the bull session started again, and as often as not came around to "know thyself". (We checked this in Bartlett's to make certain it was Socrates; it's Thales and Chaucer and Burton and Pope, but the devil a bit of Socrates.) The phrase was always good for an extra hour's talk.

And the phrase is still good—deep, thoughtful, and as hard to do as it is simple to say. The man who knows himself is indeed fortunate. He is easy to spot in a crowded room. He is serene, secure, and happy. His morale is good, he is well-adjusted. It is possible that in his long voyage of self-discovery, he has learned a smattering of psychology, and if he has not done so deliberately, he has come by it indirectly. To anyone who wants to be direct about it, we suggest MENTAL HYGIENE: *The Psychology of Personal Adjustment* by Dr. D. B. Klein.

There are all kinds of fascinating books in the world; those on the mind and how it works are among the foremost; those about one's own mind, irresistible. Reading Dr. Klein is like hearing a friendly and sympathetic physician tell you what will help. Obviously, the author's university work, plus practical application of it for 15 years in a clinic, is what makes him so easy and comforting to read. His sights are not set terrifyingly high. If you are not studious-minded, he advises you to read only Parts I and IV of the book, the general introduction and the 200-odd pages on promoting mental health. If you want to go the whole hog, Part II is on the nature of mental disease, and Part III on its prevention.

It is Part IV which commends the work to the general reader so strongly. Dr. Klein talks straight from the shoulder about "Home and the Balanced Personality", about conscience and duty and etiquette, about the problem mother-in-law, common ways of evading reality, self-deception . . . "Mammon versus Morale".

As long as children marry, there will be in-laws, and Dr. Klein asserts that "the poor mother-in-law has never commanded the professional attention her plight merits." But let's sample the doctor's own words:

> Why do we have so many mother-in-law jokes and practically no father-in-law jokes? This fact about our folkways suggests a difference in nuisance value; mothers are more likely to interfere in the lives of married children than fathers. It does not mean that the former necessarily have a greater affectionate solicitude for the welfare of the new household than the latter. The solicitude may be equal in intensity; but circumstances render it easier for fathers to pursue a "hands off" policy. In the ordinary family the father is expected to function as a breadwinner by attention to his job or profession. Managing the home and rearing the children are regarded as the chief responsibilities of the mother. This division of labor is not absolute; for the father is also supposed to be mindful of his role as disciplinarian and mentor. His life is actually centered around two foci: home and business. The mother, however, is more frequently restricted to one consuming interest; namely, her family. As a consequence, with the children married and established in homes of their own, she is more likely to experience frustration than the husband. He still has the business to absorb his energy, time, and interest. There is thus no persistent urge to find an outlet for his old paternal role by making a vocation of his status as a father-in-law. This is not so true for the mother; hence the frequency with which she yields to temptation to play the role of maternal manager in the new home. The ubiquity of mother-in-law jokes is an outcome of this state of affairs . . .
>
> In many cases the meddlesomeness of the mother-in-law is a reaction to the fear of being shelved. Another way of expressing this situation is to say that the woman is afraid of being regarded as having outlived her usefulness. Nobody who has taken pride and interest in his work can give up that work without some regret . . .
>
> To avoid this unwholesome frustration it is desirable to develop vital interests outside of routine maternal responsibilities . . . By looking ahead in this fashion (every young mother) can circumvent the mother-in-law hazard.

That passage is one of general principles, but specific cases are cited even more often—as interesting as reading some one else's mail.

Dr. Klein, as early as page 17, amends the phrase on the gymnasium to "a sound mind in a sound body in a sound society". This makes sense, even if it is reminiscent of Gertrude Stein. She never explained her rose, but Dr. Klein says what he means by "sound" and makes the vagueness definite. He is, for our money, a sound thinker, and he ends his book with a discussion on educating our young for mental health. This task, he says, "calls for the utilization of every agency capable of enabling the child to keep moving from ignorance to knowledge and from knowledge to understanding and from understanding to the wisdom which culminates in service to others. This is the wisdom back of the paradox of finding one's soul by losing it. Home and school and church and the Great Society have a part to play in making this kind of education a reality. Both introverts and extraverts need this kind of education. In fact, every individual needs it, and, in the last analysis, as is true of all genuine education, must achieve it for himself." The *mens sana,* in other words, can build for us the safe and sane society in which the *corpore sano,* relaxed, can serve instead of shoot others.

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BY D. B. KLEIN



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*The Saturday Review of Literature*

# The Anatomy of Cooperation

## *We Face an Old Problem in an Unexpected Form*

JOHN F. WHARTON

DO you remember those few happy, hopeful weeks after V-J Day? The time when you wondered whether you would get your new car in December, or would have to wait until February, or even March? Suppose that during that time someone had accurately predicted what the state of affairs would be in October 1946. What a pessimist we would have thought him! Today we would have to admit that he had been right, but we are a trifle bewildered as to why he proved right, and still more bewildered as to what to do about it. Here is one point of view.

The United States of America is a complicated social, political, and economic, cooperative organization. It is composed of a host of other cooperative organizations, some large and formal, some small and informal. By the term "cooperative organization" I do not mean so-called "consumer cooperatives," "farm-cooperatives," or the like; I mean any group of people who voluntarily cooperate on a special task under the guidance of an executive or leader. General Motors Corporation, for example, is a large, formal cooperative organization. So is the C. I. O. Six workman under a foreman in the Cadillac plant are a small, informal cooperative organization, which is part of General Motors, and also part of the C. I. O.

Our entire production and distribution system depends on the efficient operation of these organizations, both as to their internal affairs and their relations with each other. When they are running smoothly and steadily, we can turn out an enormous volume of goods and services. The war period proved that. When too many of them are operating inefficiently, or intermittently, the system falls into low gear. That is the case today.

It might be worth while, therefore, to consider some of the basic problems of cooperative organization.

### Your Part in an Organization

If you have worked for an organization of even reasonably large size, —whether as president, office boy, clerk, foreman, or manual worker— you must have noticed certain things. The first is that you either felt that the *organization as a whole* was pulling together toward an understandable goal, or you very definitely felt that it wasn't. Secondly, that there was or was not a loyalty to the organization and an *esprit de corps* in which you could share. Thirdly, that when the organization purpose was clear and *esprit de corps* high, the work went forward smoothly and efficiently. Indeed, it was often downright enjoyable. Lastly, although this may have occurred to you only quite dimly, this situation was never brought about *solely* by adequate financial rewards.

You probably couldn't explain why some businesses click and others don't. Nor why some inspire loyalty and others fail to do so. Nor just what the relationship of pay to non-financial matters consists of. It may console you to know that no one else can give very confident explanations. If they could, the current wave of strikes would never have occurred. There are, however, some remarkably keen observations available for those who care to read them.[1]

—*Max Kalish.*

**Toil's End.**

These observers approach the above questions in a somewhat roundabout way. To begin with, they insist that almost all people have an inherent desire to be part of an organization, to be members of a team.[2] Just how this desire is awakened and intensified is a subtle process, not fully understood. To bring it into play, and keep it in play, is probably the major function of the executive, and this is as true of a foreman as it is of a president. Adequate pay is probably necessary, but is not enough by itself. However, the relative importance of financial and non-financial factors varies with different groups.

LET us begin with the youngest, or with the lowest paid, workers, in a business organization. To this group, increasing financial reward is of such necessitous importance that it almost outweighs all non-financial factors. Almost; but never altogether.[3] As you go up the scale, you find that financial rewards decrease slowly in relative importance. At certain salary levels in some types of organization, it becomes of overwhelming importance to the employee to have a private office, or a private secretary. At the top of the scale you can find instances where a

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[1] Two of the best are "The Functions of the Executive" (By Chester Barnard. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 1938. $3.50) and "The Social Problems of an Industrial Civilization" (By Elton Mayo. Cambridge: Harvard University Graduate School of Business Administration. 1946. 167 pp. $2.50).

[2] A fascinating chapter in Mayo's book is the one in which he points out that the classical economists proceeded on exactly the opposite assumption. They took it for granted that the human race was a disorganized rabble, all *wanting* to do nothing but compete with each other. Therefore, they had to be forced into group work by overlords who could threaten them with fear of starvation. This assumption, which Mayo calls "The Rabble Hypothesis," even affects a great deal of our present thinking, although modern psychology has managed to demonstrate its error conclusively.

[3] Mayo gives an example of one department in a textile mill, where every conceivable kind of financial incentive plan failed to increase efficiency or reduce labor turnover. Finally some non-financial factors were corrected. The efficiency then immediately rose and the men began, for the first time, to be really interested in the financial incentive plans.



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raise of ten thousand dollars a year loses its flavor if not coupled with an election to a vice-presidency.

AS a result, when an organization increases in size, the executives find themselves faced with more and more problems as they strive to keep up *esprit de corps* and carry out the organization purpose. The members want certain "rights" which often conflict with that purpose. Indeed, the demands of one group of members often conflict violently with the demands of another group.[1] The demands involve both financial and non-financial matters, although, as pointed out above, the relative importance of the two varies from group to group. The best phrase to describe the situation is Barnard's statement that the executive faces "problems of increasing moral complexity."

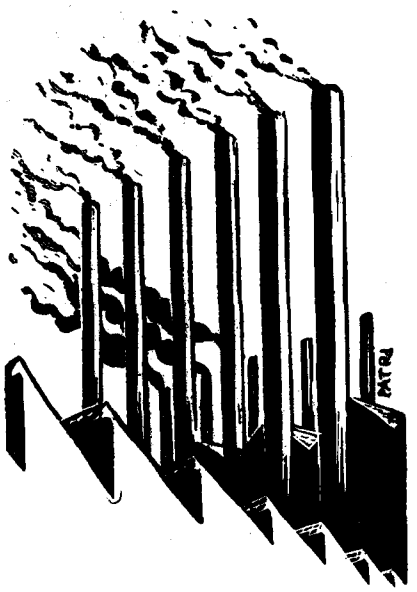
Take a simple example. The manual workers may demand higher pay per hour, better working facilities, more leisure time. The question of pay is financial. The demands for better working conditions and more leisure are non-financial; they will not result in an increase in the individual's pay envelope. Assume that by all reasonable standards of American living the demands are justified. Assume also that because of the existence of a competing product, the grant of such demands will bankrupt the business, even if the grant eventually increases efficiency enormously. Should some compromise be sought? Should it be on the financial or non-financial demands, or both? Would it be better in the long run for everyone concerned to shut up shop, throw everyone out of work, and admit the business was obsolete? This is what is meant by "increasing moral complexity."

Now, when the executives of an organization are able to solve such problems, then loyalty, *esprit de corps*, and the sense of pulling together usually follow. When they are unable to do so, whether through incompetence, or due to outside forces, or simply because the complexity is too great, failure is the eventual end. This introduces another fact which may surprise you. Despite Western man's boasts of his powers of organization, failure is the *normal*, not the abnormal, end. With only a handful of exceptions, no organization, whether religious, commercial, or political, has a history of over two hundred years.

### The Philosophical Problem

The conflict which gives rise to the most difficult problems is the age-old conflict which exists in all men and women. It is the desire to be at one and the same time a free, adventurous individual and also a member of a group, and to subordinate individual aims to the group ideal. This conflict runs from the top to the bottom of every organization. Frequently the chief executive feels himself so bound by organization responsibilities that he seems to himself the least free member. How to maintain the proper balance between the two desires is a problem which has always existed. Today it has become so complex that its existence has been overlooked.

As Barnard points out, it is a problem which can only be solved definitively by philosophy or religion. And the philosophical point where it founders is close to the question of free will against determinism. Very few people have given much deep thought to that problem in the last two hundred years. It was considered unscientific, and therefore academic. It is interesting that the organization which has given the most thought to it has had by far the longest continuity. I refer to the Roman Catholic Church.



No one, to my knowledge, not even the Roman Catholic Church, has offered a completely satisfactory solution to that problem.[2] You have doubtless argued it yourself some time. Most of the strictly logical arguments, you discovered, were in favor of the assertion that men and women have no power of choice; they are driven by forces which they cannot control. The common-sense arguments, however, support free will. No matter how much you trip me up logically, I *"know"* that I can at this moment choose whether I shall raise my right or left arm, or raise neither. I am equally sure that I can decide whether to try to live amicably with my neighbor, my employer, or my partner or to fight with him. Because of the force of the arguments on both sides, many people slide back and forth in their beliefs on the question.

Barnard sums it up by saying that there are two theories of living today which have more adherents than all the others put together. They are directly opposed, and the opposition comes from something very much akin to the above dispute. So much akin to it that one may say that the academic philosophical disputes of the Middle Ages are now being fought out in the political and economic arena.

One theory extols the virtues of "rugged individualism." It declares men should be free, free to choose what they wish. Obviously, it assumes they have the power to make the choice. If everyone followed this theory, all the time, every day, our government would become anarchy, our morals unpredictable, our commercial enterprise a shambles.

The other theory is a glorification of organization, which bids the member subordinate himself entirely to the purposes of the organization. Basically, it assumes that this will be satisfactory because the individual has little or no power of free choice and therefore needs little or no scope to exercise it. It has the same logical force behind it as determinism. But does it satisfy all of the people all of the time?

THE leader of any organization finds that, just as many people slide back and forth between a belief in free will and determinism, his followers slide back and forth between loyalty to the organization and loyalty to their own *egos*. The basic foundation seems, therefore, to be shifting sand. Small wonder that failure, not success, is the rule.

At this point it becomes relevant to consider what is perhaps the most inclusive attempt in history by any group to cope with these problems. I am referring to Soviet Russia. We have little factual evidence today concerning what is going on inside that country; but, before considering what little we do know, it may be helpful to examine Russia's present underlying philosophy. For we do know some-

(*Continued on page 28*)

[1] The Democratic party today affords a good example of this in the opposing attitude of the Northern and Southern members on labor questions.

[2] Henry Adams once compared the theology of Thomas Aquinas to the famous spire of Chartres Cathedral. The base of the spire is four-sided. When it reaches the steeple it suddenly becomes eight-sided. The transition is made so skilfully that no one can be quite sure where the four sides end and the eight begin. St. Thomas, says Adams, founded his theology on the four-square base of God's omnipotence, by which He can control every human action. Building from this base he gradually reaches a point where man has free will, and no one can quite distinguish the place where the omnipotence ends and free will begins.



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# Washington, Post-1941

*FRONTIER ON THE POTOMAC. By Jonathan Daniels. New York: The Macmillan Co.* 1946. 262 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by MARK S. WATSON

FOR a President to please all members of his own party is not only impossible (ask him; he knows). It also is insufficient, Jonathan Daniels points out. A President has to gain support from outside his own rank and file, or take defeat, so large is the non-party vote migrating back and forth in quest of a particular idea or personality, and in defiance of party principle—or, let us say, the current party declaration. Thus:

> A President has to lead the people, as both President and politician, or he and his party will be out of power. Behind Roosevelt his party remained in power in Congress but it did not always follow him as a national party. He could count on the West for support for domestic reforms which the South opposed. The South supported him as he moved toward preparation for war from which the West held back. He had to deal with both.

Even in the present Cabinet Mr. Daniels (son of a Wilsonian cabinet member and close-range observer, as one of Mr. Roosevelt's administrative assistants, of a good many Rooseveltians) discerns

> a body of individualists each intent upon his own job first and the unified policy afterward. . . . By the very nature of the American President's job he has to have men around him upon whom he personally can depend. Also he needs men who are experts rather than intimates. Every President must hope for intimates who have also the intellectual capacity of the experts, and experts who bring to the science of government the human qualities of loyalty and ease of human relations which politicians possess. Lucky Presidents do find the combination. Most find both experts and intimates who fail them.

Mr. Daniels has previously and with skill discovered the South and New England for his readers. This time he writes of the wild frontier of Washington, mainly in wartime, but it cannot be said that, for all his fluency and all his rich opportunities to explore White House and Congress, courts and armed services, departments and bureaus and Fourth Estate, he really discovers this time a great deal that is surprising to the well-informed reader. He likes and trusts many people. Like many another politician or political observer he enjoys conversation, and leans toward phrases which strive to be epigrams but do not invariably succeed. There are a good many times when the wincing reader will find the subject matter to be surprisingly trivial, by comparison with the importance of the period of which Mr. Daniels is writing and the immensity of the tasks allotted to the public figures with whom he deals. There is doubtless some fleeting interest in the exact height of Capitol Hill, and the number of Cabinet members to date and their respective ages, but the post-1941 developments in Washington cry for portrayal and analysis, rather than for casual mention, however amusing.

There are excellent reminders of political reality in our particular form of democracy, and one constantly wishes that the author would pursue them more industriously. The two earlier quotations are of this sort. So are the passages which remind us that our national representatives are primarily representatives of their localities, which elected them and which may next time defeat them, unless they are to some extent governed by that "insistent parochialism" which itself is deplored. Yet even this approach to problems has its unexpected virtues if "even Senators begin to understand that world security does not mean merely security for Washington and Moscow and London, but for Vienna, Ga., as well as tragic Vienna far away."

So, too, in another aspect, are the passages which remind us that our legislators who sometimes are from Texas and Georgia and Maine are, "even more pertinently, Congressmen from cows and cotton and potatoes . . . also representatives of big groups and big prejudices." So, in yet another, are the reminders that snobbery is no exclusive possession of Groton, and that (as W. S. Gilbert might have noted) "the free mind can live behind the broad A."

Mr. Daniels's observant eye has seen and identified a great many humbugs in Washington (although not all of them by several miles, nor always accurately) and there are some agreeable examples of a few popular delusions which long have needed exposure.

> One of the comic aspects of Washington is the bewildered businessman who hires a lawyer as a guide to take him to a place to which a policeman could direct him. A nickel phone call may be more effective in making an engagement with an official than a fee to a lawyer who pretends he carries influence. . . . I suspect that more money is wasted in Washington on lobbying fees to phonies in the practice than in almost any other corporate spending in the United States.

There are non-lawyers who have a good deal of agility and ingenuity too. Mr. Daniels tells of a lady gatecrasher who on two separate occasions slipped into Jackson Day dinners just ahead of the grand march and deftly shifted place cards so that her guests would appropriate places next the guest of honor; the lady was no more agile than the dinner vice-chairman, however, for he slipped into the room thirty seconds later and shifted them back again; to do that at two successive dinners marks him as a man of vision and action alike.

Mr. Daniels did not get into Washington life without inspection. He tells of being summoned for examination as to his past, and of being asked two weighty questions. Was he on the executive committee of a certain organization under scrutiny? Yes, replied Mr. Daniels genially, and so was the present Secretary of War. And had he written editorials against the Dies committee? "Of course I did," came the eager reply, after which the questioner could only ask lamely if he cared to file a statement explaining opposition to the Dies committee. "No, said Mr. Daniels, and that was all of that.

Despite the flounderings of our republic-become-warrior, government at Washington is recognized as having done a huge task well. Mr. Daniels speaks the fears of many when he suggests that "unfortunately, as America operates, efficiency may disappear with peace." It is all very well for the hard heart of wartime Washington to soften with time; it is too bad for the hard head to go through the same experience.

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# Revolution, Counter-Revolution

*THUNDER OUT OF CHINA. By Theodore H. White and Annalee Jacoby. New York: William Sloane Associates.* 1946. 325 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by EDGAR SNOW

THE significance of America's wartime and post-war intervention in many countries is little understood by most of us, but it is full of paradox which will astonish and fascinate future historians. The contradictions between our own professed purposes and real accomplishments, between fact and fancy and truth and myth, are the material for profound meditation and for more tears than laughter.

If our aim was not only to defeat fascism but also to liberate peoples and nations it must be admitted that in its objective results our power was often used only to restore things as they were. Except for the three Axis countries, American intervention everywhere lent its massive weight to the status quo or a speedy return to it.

The success of independence movements in Southeast Asia, for example, was no gift from the "freedom-loving" powers but came about largely as the result of conditions created by Japanese invasion and occupation. It was with Japanese arms, and not with American help, that the Burmese, Annamites, and Indonesians secured what self-government they assert today. On the other hand, American aid, and only American aid combined with victory over Japan, enabled the European powers to recover their broad domination over half a billion brown men in the Eastern colonies, to whom the four freedoms do not apply.

Probably our most spectacular attempt to sustain a status quo, and a whole order of society that clearly has become a kind of "living fossil," was the policy behind our intervention as an ally in China. Here we gave all our support to a regime which corresponded to neither the military nor political aims of the war—a dictatorship which in its two decades of history has never permitted the people to elect even one local official, and which we knew to be militarily incompetent, politically corrupt, and morally indefensible. We rearmed, refinanced, and re-equipped the families in power, while we never gave the least concrete assistance to popular groups, non-communist as well as communist, who were demanding changes and reforms of manifest importance to the winning of the war. But in China, as elsewhere in Asia, some opposition elements built up a certain independent strength out of the milieu made by the conflict itself, things quite beyond our control; they were able to organize a mighty following by seizing weapons from the Japanese. And again, except for American intervention on its behalf, the status quo would never have survived the great test of history.

That is the anomolous truth which emerges from the pages of "Thunder Out of China," a book of superb reportage which amounts to a one-volume outline history of the war in East Asia. Exceptionally able observers, and politically mature beyond their years, Theodore White and Annalee Jacoby have been eye witnesses of events which they here bring into focus and perspective against the immense and complicated background of revolution in Asia. Their book is more than a war review; they see America's defeat of Japan as only an episode in a continuing struggle for emancipation which spreads over an entire continent, where men "are still trying to free themselves from their past of hunger and suffering."

Pearl Harbor properly traces back to its origins in the triumph of counter-revolution in Japan, the authors think, against the same forces demanding change throughout Asia. Because democratic energies were suppressed there, the old feudal agencies in Japan succeeded in mobilizing new means of production for aggressive war. Similar revolutionary and counter-revolutionary forces were present in China, "and our own future security depends on our understanding how powerful those forces are." Of all American commanders in China, only the late General Joseph Stilwell understood "that both victory and peace rested on the measure with which the strength of the people could be freed from feudal restraints," which he recognized to be the larger revolutionary intent of the war in Asia.

Chiang Kai-shek, who came to look upon Stilwell and the Chinese Communists as more dangerous enemies than the Japanese warlords, "could not understand the revolution whose creature he was, except as something fearful and terrible that had to be crushed," and thus the story of the China war was "the story of the tragedy of Chiang Kai-shek."

> The people whom he led felt instinctively that this war against Japan was a war against the entire rotten fabric of time-worn misery. When Chiang tried to fight the Japanese and preserve the old fabric at the same time, he was not only unable to defeat the Japanese but powerless to preserve his own authority. His historic enemies, the Communists, grew from an army of 85,000 to an army of a million, from the governors of 1,500,000 peasants to the masters of 90,000,000. The Communists used no magic; they knew the changes the people wanted and they sponsored these changes.

Despite such candid judgments, this is no text of dogma but a slow growth of truth, a road to understanding China composed of unassailable fact piled on fact. In brilliant condensations of the pertinent economic, social, political, and military data, the authors tell us how the war was fought, and not fought, both before and after Pearl Harbor; how the peasants made the army, fed the army, and died by millions, more of them from starvation and neglect than from wounds of battle; about Chiang Kai-shek and the ruling Soongs, Kungs, Chens, and their cohorts; of good people and bad and of our own influence on both; and why America ended by helping to preserve, in precarious balance, the evil system of wretched exploitation and human degradation against which the Chinese people fought, as much as they did against the weight of Japanese oppression itself.

For many readers "Thunder Out of China" will present the first clear and coherent picture of the Stilwell affair and the tragi-comic failure of Patrick Hurley, who reversed Stilwell's policy. Here, too, is a description and explanation of the little understood period when Hurley intervened against



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the partisan forces in eastern China and physically restored Chiang Kai-shek to power there, thus "leaguing the American military forces in direct coalition with the Kuomintang against the Communists," a position our marines are still defending today. In this decision the authors rightly emphasize "the hard fact that in the eyes of millions of Chinese their civil war was made in America," and the cause of the "unexampled complexity" of the task of General Marshall, who was sent to China to liquidate the bankruptcy in which the unfortunate Patrick Hurley had left our policy toward that country.

Offering their own "solution," White and Jacoby conclude that today General Marshall's mission is hopeless unless we correct the mistakes which led to the present impasse. Briefly, they advocate: (1) that we confer with Soviet Russia and agree upon a common policy of military withdrawal from China; (2) abandon one-power mediation and seek to enlarge our effort to include the USSR, on the basis of the Moscow declaration calling for a multi-party, representative, reform government in China; (3) withhold all aid from Chiang Kai-shek till he has ceased his military offensives and taken concrete steps to end his dictatorship; (4) give unstinting economic aid to China, once representative government has replaced the present regime.

The Book-of-the-Month Club has done a public service in selecting "Thunder Out of China" for its million members to read. It is not only factually accurate and honest, and places events in their proper sequence and proportion, but it is one of the most readable of all war books. Handled with the skill of accomplished craftsmen, the story is told in such sharp, clean, smooth-flowing prose that it is as easy to read as watching a movie. Despite the apprenticeship both authors served as *Time-Life* correspondents they have somehow learned to write.

There is genuine breadth and depth and unusual scope in this work, achieved by a fine discernment in selection of the significant. Hardly a word is wasted, and the integration of the present event with history, of the personality with cause and effect, of the impact of accident on design, and the interplay of the immanent and the external, are all accomplished with an expert sense of organization. This is a new kind of war correspondent's book, informed in its history, correct in detail, and refreshing in the self-effacement of the authors beside the magnitude and importance of the social dynamics which they show in copious flux.

# Story with Dual Focus

*I NAME THEE MARA. By Edmund Gilligan. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.* 1946. 429 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by WALTER HAVIGHURST

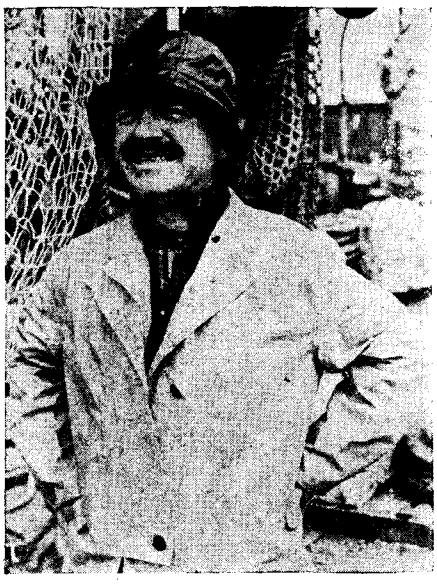
EDMUND GILLIGAN'S new tale of the Gloucester schoonermen is both realistic and legendary. It is a story of the twentieth century and yet it seems as long ago as the voyage of Jason for the fabled Fleece. This dual focus appears early, when the boy Stephen Delehanty, sitting in a schoolroom in Gloucester, became "filled with a Greek joy" and dreamed of sailing the Hellenic Sea. As the story develops, the Grand Banks and Newfoundland often suggest the mysterious world of the Argonauts.

The novel reads like legend, with language formalized and faintly archaic, and it has a lengedary tale to tell. The tale is of two brothers, of their rivalry and loyalty, and of the bond that held them through life and through apparent death. After a dispute at sea Stephen's fist sent his brother reeling and a lurch of the vessel pitched him overboard. All thought him dead, "feeding the salt." But Stephen, driven by conscience and kinship, took up the long, stern, eventful search for his brother, in a mood that may remind you of another desperate captain's search for an albino whale.

So the twentieth-century trawlermen, with tar-blackened fingers and cod-smelling clothes, seem to take their places in a dim world of prophecy and myth.

Into the story are woven many Biblical references, beginning when the patriarchal Grandfather Dillon turns to the Book of Ruth and names the vessel ("Call me not Naomi; call me Mara; for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me") upon whose quarterdeck the grandsons play their Cain-and-Abel role. The *Mara's* companion-vessel, on the fishing grounds and in the long search for the missing Abel Delehanty, was the *Medea*, sailed by Mark and Michael Dillon, cousins of the Delehanty brothers. One vessel named from the Old Testament, the other from the myths of Greece.

In both vessels the men loom larger than life, through an atmosphere of mystery and fate. They become symbols. Stephen Delehanty is "the Atlantic man, daring, longing, angry, magnificent to the eye and to the soul." And against this Western man is the gentle Abel, who fell short of his brother and who went beyond him. He is, by unstated inference, the Pacific man, the seeker after



Edmund Gilligan's new novel "I Name Thee Mara" is moving, dramatic, highly charged, crowded, murky, and magnificent.

beauty and universal kinship, to whom "men meant more than vessels or cod." He had listened with a better heart to the little sermons of his childhood.

It is all moving and dramatic and highly charged; and one comes to feel that Mr. Gilligan has crowded too much into his novel. Too much symbolism, too many correspondences of twentieth-century fishermen to too many ancient myths. The result is murky and magnificient. And credible Gloucester men become shadows against cloud and water.

In keeping with the exalted narrative there are scenes of great intensity. In a storm-tossed dory Stephen and Abel drift for six days before casting up on Sable Island. Here they are authentic sailormen with human powers and limitations. And there is authentic human struggle in the wreck of the *Medea* off Bay St. George when the reef cuts into the vessel's heart and the masts come crashing down.

The symbolism is likely to fade from a reader's mind, but there will remain a sombre and triumphant picture of the vigor, splendor, and sorrow of the life at sea.

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Some years ago an article in *The Saturday Review of Literature*, noting the popularity of books about Lincoln, doctors, and dogs, suggested that an all-time best seller would be a book entitled "Lincoln's Doctor's Dog." Judging by today's trend, it seems to us someone has a chance to go a step further and top this by writing a volume to be called "A Psychiatric Study of Lincoln's Doctor's Dog."—*The Pleasures of Publishing*, Columbia University Press.



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# Mr. Priestley's Questing Hero

*BRIGHT DAY. By J. B. Priestley. New York: Harper & Bros. 1946. 286 pp. $2.50.*

Reviewed by NATHAN L. ROTHMAN

IT ought to be possible to have some sort of sign to put over a word, which would mean: Simple definition only, positively no connotations. For example, I should like to say that Mr. Priestley has written an escapist novel, without having to explain that the word is used in its simple and literal sense, with no implication that Mr. Priestley ought not to write such a book. It is the kind of escapist novel which expresses the experience of many self-conscious and literate men over forty. Such a man gazes into his mirror on one crucial morning, and is aware suddenly of the ambiguous image before him. This aging, tired-looking, and far from spiritual flesh that stares back: is it he? Where is the young, hopeful, indefatigable romantic, the dreamer of dreams, whose image is marked so clearly back of the mind's eye, but may not any longer be found in the mirror? At what turn of the road was he left behind? Could one go back and find him there?

So many times the steps have been retraced in the search. Perhaps "Conrad in Quest of His Youth" might be a generic title for all of these sad and foredoomed ventures. Mr. Priestley, however, feels neither sad nor desperate about the search. Indeed his hero, Gregory Dawson, makes the transition from the present into the past, and back again, very much as one would pass through the several steam and shower rooms of a Turkish bath, and comes forth again quite cleansed and stimulated, with all the old despairs and uncertainties sweated out of his pores, and with a key to a new life clutched in his hand like a premium. Dawson is a writer of movie scripts, who has gone down to an English resort to finish off a special job he is doing, something he feels will express his bitter and hopeless feeling about the world's condition. And something, moreover, which he will be able to communicate to his audience, to "whisper in the dark to fifty million people . . . telling them quietly to expect nothing from such a world as this but the worst, imploring them not to be fooled again by anybody." Maybe they can do that in British pictures. But before Dawson can go through with his original plan, he is drawn back, by an accidental meeting, to a conscious quest of his youth. Somewhere there, he feels sure, are the root causes of his unhappiness and his restlessness. And

*J. B. Priestley has written an escapist novel, [escapist] in its simple and literal sense."

quite easily the whole thing unrolls, the magic pattern of his youth, his life with a gay family called the Alingtons, his discoveries of music and friendship and young love, all re-experienced in sentimental and pastoral detail. This is the old familiar charm of the pre-war (1) British novel, of H. G. Wells and Arnold Bennett, as well as the earlier Priestley of "The Good Companions."

What Dawson finds is something far simpler than a specific cause for his restlessness. What he finds is that he is unhappy now simply because he is not living as he was then, that there was magic in those happy young days and that "life without magic soon begins to wither." He seems aware of no mature magic to fill that need. So the very meaning of his search, and the meaning of the book along with it, loses its original significance, and shrinks down to the rather childish spectacle of a man trying to crawl back into the protective warmth of his youth. Somehow he seemed a better man when he started, bitterness, script, and all. Mr. Priestley is quite kind to him, and permits him even a key in the present with which to unlock that magic past and have it again—a girl he once knew, now met again, at the coincidental moment. It ends quite happily so, in an upsweep of hope in the same rich warm world. If anybody is going to tell the world not to be fooled again, it won't be Gregory Dawson now, or J. B. Priestley either.

# *Your Literary I.Q.*

By Howard Collins

POEM TO BE SUNG AS A NOCTURNE IN A DESERTED BRICKYARD WHEN YOU ARE OLD

How many of the 33 titles of modern poems can you spot in this bit of doggerel by Russell Speirs of Hamilton, New York? Allowing three points for each correct answer, a score of 60 is par, 69 is very good, and 75 or better is excellent. Answers are on page 36.

All but blind, at the keyhole, I could see
  John Gorham on his ars poetica.
It was Ash Wednesday, and he talked about
  God's world, and of how energetic a
Fellow was this poor Bewick Finzer, who,
  Once in the servants' quarters when the fog
Wove halos 'round the portrait of a lady,
  Drank too much coffee and far too much grog.
Forgetting who I was, he blurted out:
  "You, Andrew Marvell, know the Roman road
As well as the lake isle of Innisfree,
  The dark-eyed gentleman, the horned toad,
The people, yes—the animals, the plants,
  Immortal autumn, the bazooka tree
The tuft of flowers at the water's edge.
  All these you know, and yet you don't know me.
What lips my lips have kissed you'll never guess,
  Nor how once, with the hollow men, among
School children, to a common prostitute
  I whispered of the Chilterns, where had sung
The Chinese nightingale and Reuben Bright.
  Pity me not because I tell you now
This fable. There's another one about
  A Finnish paratrooper and the cow
In apple time, but that's such an old story.
  I heard a fly buzz when I died. I think
A bird came down the walk, so let us go
  Find Richard Cory and absorb a drink."



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# "John Yankee and His Son"

*THE SELECTED WRITINGS OF JOHN AND JOHN QUINCY ADAMS. Edited by Adrienne Koch and William Peden. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.* 1946. 410 *pp.* $4.50.

Reviewed by DUMAS MALONE

SELECTIONS from the writings of eminent men, brought within the compass of a handy volume, serve an exceedingly useful purpose when carefully chosen and well edited. This book meets those tests admirably and is most welcome. It involved more careful selection than usual, for both John and John Quincy Adams run to many volumes. However, there are distinct advantages in having "John Yankee and His Son" together (they are thus designated in the introduction), because the personal and historical ties between them were very close. The volume is divided between them with approximate equality, and the careers of both are outlined in an introduction of about thirty pages.

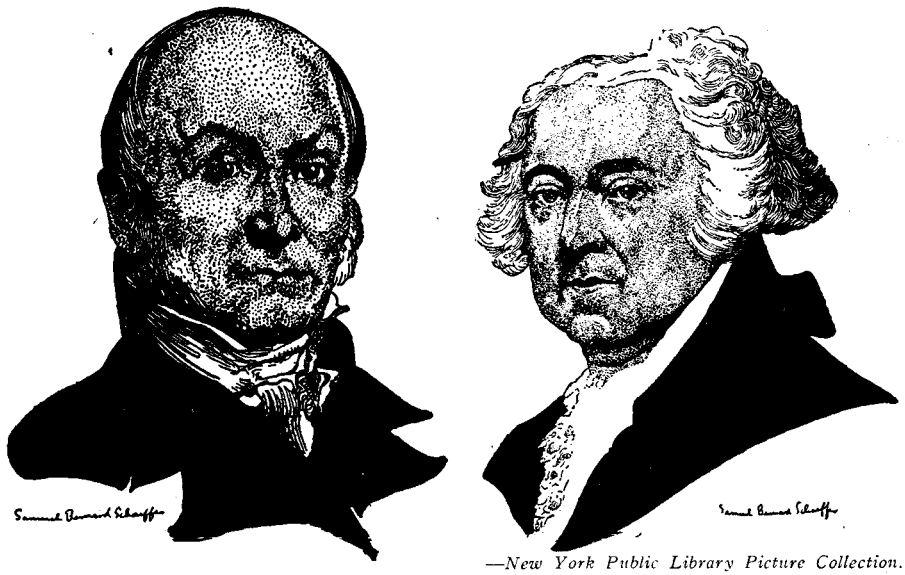
This cannot be expected to do full justice to all the important public questions which these two men dealt with in their long and controversial careers. It is a fresh and thoughtful treatment, however, and is particularly good in providing clues to the Adams mind. Here one can gain a definite idea of just what John meant by democracy; and, since he meant "direct" democracy, or "unchecked popular rule," one finds it relatively easy to understand why he feared and opposed it. In advocating a system of checks and balances as the only safeguard against this and other forms of tyranny, he was more notable among his contemporaries for his pessimistic (or realistic) view of human nature than for any personal leaning toward aristocracy. There was a time when he liked the trappings of authority but, as the editors show, he himself was a man of simpler tastes than Jefferson; and his essential liberalism is clearly revealed in the correspondence of old age with that once-alienated friend.

John Quincy Adams, as shown here, was less interested in political theory and more concerned with applications, but the close connection between his thought and that of his father is shown. The human qualities of the two men are suggested in the introduction and unmistakably revealed in the selections. Both of them were unmanageable — incorrigibly independent. Neither of them belonged to what the son called the "common and vulgar herd" of statesmen, who were disposed to promote their personal interests at the country's expense. John did have vanity as a besetting sin; he had a "passion for distinction." Both men appear as lonely figures. "Repeating his father's pattern, he [John Quincy] found true companionship only with his own family." Both were strong unionists, had a stern sense of public duty, and would bow the knee to no foreign power. As John wrote Abigail, "We will have neither John Bull nor Louis Baboon."

The selections from John Adams include well-chosen passages from his ponderous formal writings: his "Thoughts on Government," his "Defence of the Constitutions," his "Discourses on Davila," as well as the whole of his generally forgotten inaugural speech. As a formal writer he has to be taken in small doses. He is always worth listening to, if one can be patient, but it is in his letters, his diary, and his autobiography that he is at his best. Along with letters to his Portia (Abigail), Benjamin Rush, Jefferson, and others, is a thoroughly characteristic one (to Skelton Jones) in response to a request for biographical information. This should not be overlooked.

The selections from John Quincy include portions of his early controversial pamphlets, letters from abroad during various diplomatic missions, and an autobiographical reply to Skelton Jones which may be profitably compared with the much blunter response of his father. "As far as I know myself," he said, "the motives of my public conduct have always been pure and disinterested. Perhaps I have too much indulged the suggestions of my own judgment, and paid too little deference to that of other men."

The extracts from his famous diary are generally centered in important controversies or events. We wish there could have been more of them. Of particular interest are selections from his later life which are not included in his incompletely published writings. His "Parties in the United States" has recently been made available, but his memoirs of Madison and Monroe are hard to get at and deserve to be better known. He appears as a reasonable and judicious man in these mature and measured utterances, and at a distance he is most admirable—even likable, though less so, doubtless, than his forthright father. Neither of them was any sort of a politician, in the common sense, but they were minds of unusual ability and men of unquestionable greatness. They richly deserve to live in American memory and they can be judged best from their own words, which are here made so conveniently available.



—*New York Public Library Picture Collection.*

**"Neither [John Quincy Adams or John Adams] was any sort of a politician . . . but they were minds of unusual ability and men of unquestionable greatness."**

## *Dunce's Song*

By Mark Van Doren

THE wind that comes, the wind that goes,
Never tells me what it knows.
The wind is witness of all things—
Of water's birth, of Saturn's rings,
Of sin's undoing, of love's laws,
And revolutions without cause—
But still my face is famine lean;
The wind that sees cannot be seen.
If I could turn a sudden head,
Sidewise perhaps, as the wind sped
And its dark edges rippled by,
I might grow wise enough to die.
But here I stand and only know:
Wind come, wind go.



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# Peacemaking After Napoleon

*THE CONGRESS OF VIENNA: A Study in Allied Unity,* 1812-1822. *By Harold Nicolson. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co.* 1946. 312 *pp.* $4.

Reviewed by VERA MICHELES DEAN

THIS engrossing study of the permutations of another Grand Alliance over a century ago should be read, as its author, well-known for his previous studies of diplomatic history, notably "Peacemaking, 1919," intends it to be read—as background commentary on the efforts of the peacemakers of 1946 at Paris and Lake Success, N. Y. Mr. Nicolson, in his introduction, makes no claim to original research in a book he describes from the outset as concerned with "the grouping and regrouping of the United Nations." What he does show is the fundamental difficulty of maintaining any coalition formed for the purpose of assuring the national survival of each one of its members against danger threatened by a common enemy once the danger has been removed. He also points out another weakness of military alliances with which we have become all too familiar during World War II—and that is the natural reluctance of allies to define with any degree of clarity the aims they publicly claim to be pursuing together. This lack of clarity is tolerable, and perhaps even inevitable while the outcome of the war is still uncertain. But the moment the enemy has been defeated — whether Napoleon, the Kaiser, or Hitler—all the Allies insist on capitalizing as much as possible on their respective contributions to victory, and then begin the endless controversies about strategic positions, colonies, and territorial acquisitions which sow the seeds of still other conflicts.

It is both disheartening and yet somehow peculiarly calming, on rereading the history of an epoch so similar in many respects to our own, to be reminded how little we have learned from past experience, and yet how stable are some of the main lines of conduct of nations, in spite of the internal changes they undergo from time to time. Mr. Nicolson might be culling items from today's newspapers when he writes: "It was indeed true that Russia, having endured harsh suffering and achieved magnificent triumphs, was assuming an attitude of arrogant secretiveness which caused dismay to her partners in the Quadruple Alliance"; or "from the remotest corners of Europe, Asia, Africa, and even America reports began to pour in regarding the presence of

**Harold Nicolson: "Good diplomacy must be based on confidence and [it] can only be created by consistency and truthfulness."**

mysterious Russian agents and the activities of energetic and overbearing Russian diplomatists; or again, "it was obvious also that once Great Britain had achieved her desires in regard to Antwerp, Maritime Rights, and the colonies, she would have no further motive to appease Russia and might tend, in the general interests of the balance of power, to support Austria in her opposition to Russian ambitions."

From a study of the contrasting personalities of the chief actors in the post-Napoleonic drama — Metternich, Talleyrand, Alexander I, and Castlereagh—and of their varying reactions to the problems of their period, which was another great seed time of revolutionary change, three main conclusions may be drawn about relations between Russia and Britain in Europe with which Mr. Nicolson is particularly concerned. First, Russia reached the peak of its influence when Alexander I entered Paris and was acclaimed as Agamemnon. In Nicolson's opinion the Czar never recovered the position of apogee he had achieved at that time because "he failed to realize that good diplomacy must be based on confidence; and that confidence can only be created by consistency and truthfulness." (Will similar words be written by a future historian about Stalin?) Following Alexander's unpropitious visit to London, the British public, says Nicolson, ceased "to regard Russia as the hope of the new world," and both the government and the opposition came to the conclusion that the future security of the British Empire "must be based upon the more calculable interests of the older Europe."

The second important conclusion is that the security of the British Empire, which Nicolson defines as the balance of power, required reconciliation between Britain and France, its recent and bitter enemy. Mr. Nicolson, in an eloquent passage, comes to the defense of the balance of power, so frequently denounced by American commentators. Even today, he says, "there are many people who imagine that the balance of power, instead of being one of the most stable guarantees of peace, is in some unexplained manner the cause of wars"; and declares that, apart from being advantageous to Great Britain, the balance of power policy "was also advantageous to the world at large." It is not for this policy that he criticizes Castlereagh, but for his desire to "enforce static principles upon a dynamic world" in the hope thereby of achieving peace. "Obsessed as he was by the long years of struggle against French militarism, he identified liberal thought with revolution and revolution with war." But the Holy Alliance which Metternich and Alexander wanted to use for the purpose of preserving the *status quo* was essentially repugnant to the British. Russia insisted on intervention in the internal affairs of other countries, Britain refused to intervene unless internal developments appeared to threaten peace.

On this issue and this is the third main conclusion, a showdown became inevitable even before the death of Castlereagh in 1822. Two years earlier the British foreign minister who had struggled to maintain the United Nations of his day had to admit that there was "a difference of outlook and method between autocratic, or Eastern Powers, and the

**FRASER YOUNG'S LITERARY CRYPT: NO. 175**

*A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 175 will be found in the next issue.*

NGAOLNQ XE QVJBB—

CGLJQVE CG GLJ VXCB

PAO XQE YPJDBEQ

NGANBJA.—ZPQVBM PJAGYO.

—YXQBJPQLJB PAO OGDZP.

*Answers to Literary Crypt No. 174*

I sit beside my lonely fire,
And pray for wisdom yet—
For calmness to remember.
Or courage to forget.

CHARLES AIDE
—*Remember or Forget.*



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democratic or Western Powers." His successor, Canning, insisted that Britain should dissociate itself from the Holy Alliance and place itself in the vanguard of the new movement for nationalism and democracy, leading the world "along the middle path between despotism and revolution." It is interesting to speculate, in the midst of our own attempts to arrive at a new equilibrium of the world, whether the role then assumed by Britain will now be shared by the United States; whether the New World, which had no share in the Vienna peacemaking, will now serve to redress the balance of the Old, to use Canning's prophetic phrase.

# A Study of Four Contested Areas

*SPHERES OF INFLUENCE. By Sydney Morrell. New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce, Inc.* 1946. 339 *pp.* $3.50.

Reviewed by EDGAR ANSEL MOWRER

SYDNEY MORRELL is a good British newspaperman who, during the war, worked in political warfare. "Spheres of Influence" is the gist of what he saw in four places.

Its main thesis—as I read it—is that the British and American Governments during the war neglected politics. A great part of their present difficulties is due to this factor. One reason why the democracies had no firm propaganda line during the war was that—once they permitted the abandonment of the Atlantic Charter—they had no political policy. Therefore, "somewhere during what at one time was called the People's War we began to travel down the wrong road."

As a former colleague of Mr. Morrell in the Office of Facts and Figures and the OWI, I can corroborate this. That fact, even more than incompetence at the top, was what made it so difficult to stay in psychological warfare under President Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill. For these gentlemen were sacrificing moral principle and our political future to military expediency.

Nonetheless, we are still facing the consequences.

Mr. Morrell demonstrates his thesis in a study of four contested areas which he personally visited — Iran, Greece, Yugoslavia, and Italy. Those who wish to understand how these countries "got like this" should read "Spheres of Influence."

1. Iran. In this country the Soviets had a line—pseudo-democratic—but very real. It passed as democratic and it appealed to parts of the utterly downtrodden and starved Iranian masses.

The British had an active counterline, based on support of the possessing classes and the half-wild tribes who are now in revolt. Any British line was bound to be ineffective, however, because of Britain's reputation for imperialism. It was for the Americans to take over the job of swinging the Iranians away from both obscurantist feudalism and pseudo-democracy to real democracy. OWI tried hard to move in and do the job—and was stopped short by the War Department. Here, too, the outrageous practice of making a military man supreme over an entire area left politics and propaganda completely at the mercy of people who had no understanding of either. In Teheran, this American sabotage was carried out consciously by a martinet called Major General Donald H. Connally who—according to Mr. Morrell—felt himself superior not only to the OWI officials but to the American Embassy as well.

General Connally should look at Iran now and be proud of his work.

2. Greece. Mr. Morrell makes a very good case for his thesis that at the time British troops began shooting down Greek leftists in December 1944 the choice really was between a new Tito regime under Communist management and the restoration of the discredited king, the royalists and their fascist friends. Many American students who have looked into the matter have come to the same conclusion. But that merely puts the responsibility a degree farther back. It suggests questions.

Would it not have been possible for the British, who armed EAM and ELAS, to make quite sure that non-Communists remained in control?

*—Fitzpatrick in* St. Louis-Post-Dispatch.
**Learned nothing?**

By eliminating from the forces outside Greece all those Greek elements who had backed King George and his Duce, Metaxas, in their suppression of Greek freedom, could not Mr. Churchill have scotched reaction in Greece?

Many close students believe the answer to both questions is yes. It seems to me that Mr. Morrell should have followed this line of investigation. Until it has been proven false, people like this reviewer will continue to believe that, whatever the situation in December 1944, Britishers like Mr. Churchill are responsible for the present disgraceful regime in Hellas.

3. Yugoslavia. Here Mr. Morrell is at his best. Here is why Britain, reluctantly followed by the U. S. A., nourished a man called Tito who, once the shooting stopped, asked the heads of the British and American military missions (without whom he would still be a homeless refugee) to leave Yugoslavia within forty-eight hours. If you are interested in the complicated Mihailovitch-Tito controversy, read "Spheres of Influence." (Incidentally, I wonder how Mr. Morrell would react to the statement by Robert Lee Wolff in *The Atlantic Monthly* that there is "no doubt" but that Mihailovitch personally collaborated with the enemy.)

I agree with this book that it was right for us to continue sending UNRRA supplies to Tito's people regardless of how falsely and treacherously he behaved toward us. Some day this generosity will pay dividends.

4. Italy. Here I part company with "Spheres of Influence." I believe that the United Nations should have gone into each occupied country with a nucleus of a civilian government preferably composed of refugees of proved democratic mind. This nucleus should then have recruited more people from among the best inhabitants. Together the refugees and the domestic group should have decided and carried out whatever political arrests and purges were necessary—independent of the views of our military commanders!

These provisional governments should have carried on until the "purge" was complete and the fighting over. At that point, they should have restored democratic freedoms, held impartial elections on Anglo-Saxon lines—and retired.

This in Italy would have saved us a) from the ignominy of dealing with people like Marshal Badoglio and King Victor and b) from the real danger of a resurrection of fascismo.

For, in my judgment, resurrected Italy is still anything but the political success that Mr. Morrell thinks it is.



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# Pen-Portrait of a Great Journalist

*HORACE GREELEY, PRINTER, EDITOR, CRUSADER. By Henry Luther Stoddard. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons.* 1946. 325 *pp.* $3.50.

Reviewed by
OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

THIS is a most interesting and well-told brief life of that extraordinary journalistic genius Horace Greeley written by Henry L. Stoddard, himself a veteran journalist with four-score years and more behind him. Since it comprises only 325 pages, it is necessarily more of a pen-portrait than a deep historical study. It gives, however, most of the salient facts in Greeley's career and stresses properly those admirable characteristics which made him the greatest journalistic force of his time—his complete unselfishness so far as his public service was concerned, his refusal to enrich himself by his great newspaper success, his eagerness to espouse every humanitarian cause and, above all, his absolute devotion to principle.

This penniless, unschooled boy who came direct from the plow, from a home distinguished only by the direst poverty, by the force of his personality, the power of his pen, and the basic morality of his principles, outstripped his contemporaries like Dana, Raymond, and Bennett, and wound up by becoming a candidate for the Presidency of the United States and polling for himself forty-three per cent of the electors who went to the polls in 1872. This was the more remarkable because Greeley was an oddity, had an eccentric personality, and deliberately cultivated hats and clothes unlike those worn by other men. He was a good deal of a showman, yet he was not a self-advertiser. But he put his vivid personality into his editorial page so that his semi-weekly *Tribune* was read all over the Union and he himself became the intimate friend of multitudes who never laid eyes on him.

He was like William Lloyd Garrison in that he was a trained printer who could put into type his own editorials and, also like the editor of the *Liberator,* he forged his powerful style out of his inner hatred of injustice. He was not, however, driven to writing by an overwhelming hatred of slavery or social wrongs. He wanted to plead for the underdog and he was scoffed at because of the many "isms" which he championed—the "Bloomer dress" for women, woman suffrage, temperance, opposition to the use of tobacco, the cause of labor and social progress, etc., etc., being often at the forefront of reforms which after a time became part of American life. But his abiding motive was the desire for completest self-expression. He knew no master and boasted both that "I speak my own thoughts," and that he depended "on the Heart—not the Voice." Whatever else may be said of his *Tribune* it was certainly unbossed and a law unto itself.

Moreover, Greeley was not only a great, a moving, and a convincing writer, he was a remarkable journa-

—*From the book.*

**A caricature of the day.**

list and director of journalists. Here Mr. Stoddard might well have elaborated; he does not do full justice to Greeley's ability to pick brilliant correspondents and to give them free rein, or portray to the full Greeley's creating a great newsgathering daily, clean and honest, and covering a wide field of human interest—even to the recording of the latest inventions. After all these years, and with all our modern press devices, no student in our schools of journalism should be graduated without a knowledge of Greeley's *Tribune* and, from another point of view, the elder Bennett's *New York Herald.* These editors might and did vilify and abuse each other and for years carry on personal vendettas, but the accuracy of their reporting, the space they gave to important addresses and documents, and their readiness in the slavery crisis to print the other fellow's side remain to prove them masters of their profession.

That the anti-slavery editors used violent language to decry the "peculiar institution" is true. As Greeley put it: "No other language than we use would faithfully express our convictions. We must treat it as we do other gigantic perfidies and crimes. The conflagration it threatens is not to be extinguished by jets of rosewater." Had they done anything else, that horrible system of human enslavement must have persisted much longer than it did. That their language irritated multitudes was the price that Greeley, for one, gladly paid. He was rarely worried by "stop-my-subscription" letters—only, perhaps, when his Christian desire after Lee's surrender to be magnanimous to the South as evidenced by his readiness to go bail for Jefferson Davis, and his remarkable demand for "magnanimity in triumph," in which he besought Lincoln (so near his end) to say in effect: "Slavery having, through rebellion, committed suicide, let the North and South unite to bury its carcass and then clasp hands across the grave," brought tremendous abuse. What miseries, what material and spiritual losses would have been avoided had the country but followed Greeley's advice might well be kept today before those who see no other way in Europe than bitter vengeance against our enemies. Greeley knew that the United States must not make martyrs out of the rebels nor persecute them. Had it done so the Reconstruction record would be far worse than it is.

Mr. Stoddard's desire to hold the scales of judgment even is illustrated in the frankness with which he treats Greeley the political leader. There was much truth in Andrew Johnson's characterization of Greeley when he was urged to put the latter into his Cabinet:

> I told Blair that I would not have Greeley on any account. . . . He nearly bothered the life out of Lincoln and it was difficult to tell whether he wanted union or separation, war or peace. Greeley is all heart and no head. He is the most vacillating man in the country. He runs to goodness of heart so much as to produce infirmity of mind. . . . I told him [Blair] that Greeley was a sublime old child but would be of no service to me.

It seems as if no one less fit to be in the White House could have been picked to run for President except for the essential honesty, the nobility, yes the Christianity of the man. He knew that he would be defeated and he suffered deeply always from the personal attacks upon him. As it was he collapsed mentally when the campaign



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ended and died within the month in which the election occurred.

Mr. Stoddard also deals honestly and frankly with the terrible story of Greeley's home life. Although all heart, he sat by silently while his wife killed by neglect at least one of her children and tortured a bright boy, whom Greeley declared to be the light of his life, until death must have been a release from his dreadful mistreatment—his mother would not even permit the boy to have normal food or the companionship of other children and whipped him constantly. Four of their six children died under this regime. The home—which Greeley completely subordinated to his profession—was utterly barren of comfort, or charm, or even proper equipment. I know of nothing to compare with this story in literary and political annals.

While one regrets Mr. Stoddard's omissions—such as the story of Greeley's joining two *Tribune* correspondents, Richardson and Villard, in Denver in 1859 in certifying to the existence of gold in Colorado and starting the gold rush to that territory—it must again be stressed that the book is warmly to be welcomed. It should be widely read as an inspiring proof of the heights to which high character and talent can rise, for beyond doubt Greeley exercised a greater influence upon his time than any of the statesmen with whom Lincoln and his immediate predecessors in the White House were surrounded.

# How To Do It, with Samples

*CONFESSIONS OF A STORY WRITER. By Paul Gallico. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.* 1946. 576 *pp.* $3.75.

Reviewed by PHIL STONG

MR. GALLICO has killed three birds with one stone in this book; first, at least two-thirds of the twenty-four stories in his book are "mahty fine"; second, he tells, autobiographically, how to detect a story notion; third, he tells you how to wrestle with it. It is probably as good an exemplary text on how to do short stories as has been written. But lives there a man with soul so dead that he does not plan to write a short story, or a novel, or his memoirs—any publisher or agent or editor will state that such an idea is preposterous—there are still twenty stories, at least, for the entertainment of the dead soul.

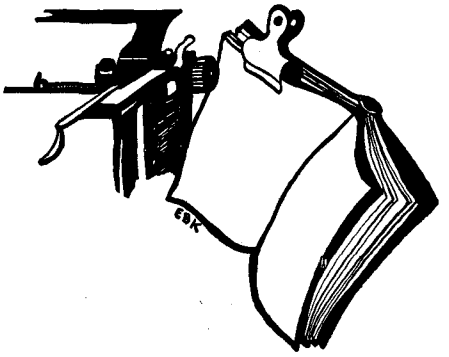
Mr. Gallico has had the kindness to package his stories neatly; new yarns, sport stories, flying stories, subdeb stories (very funny), adventure stories, war stories—a catholic chap, this Gallico.

The author obviously has a fondness for "The Snow Goose," a story about a crippled English boatsman who is accompanied by a tamed Canadian snow goose on his rescue expeditions to Dunkerque. A good story, but to my mind not in a class with "Verna." Verna was a little USO entertainer of no talent whatever, whose naïve cheesecake act reminded the kids in combat of equally inept but cute girls at home, so that she was a terrific hit. Verna and her career wear a bit on the other members of the troupe, competent professionals, who recognize the reasons for the applause—but she finally has the career, in one scene.

Mr. Gallico is candid about the "pattern" stories—a section more successful from the critical standpoint, in its notes, than in the two mildly amusing golf narratives used as illustrations. The debutante stories aren't as funny as Dorothy Parker but they are funny enough, particularly the yarn where the two Chicago debutantes attend the Coronation of George VI on tickets for the Coronation of George V and the simple gall of "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes."

The newspaper and boxing stories are more clever than designed, if the distinction is apparent, but they have the sincerity that illuminates any story that is even moderately well constructed. I interviewed Paul once, for *Editor & Publisher*, on the promotion angles of the Golden Gloves boxing tournaments. I made it short, because his New York team had been licked by the Chicago Glovers a night or two before and he was not interested in ghoulish business considerations. I didn't know whether he was going to bawl or sock me one. Since he tops my six feet and a little by three inches or so either eventuality would have been embarrassing to me.

When Gallico got feelings he got feelings, but there is only one small story in this book that isn't helped by that fact.



# Little Malice

*THE PLEASURE WAS MINE. By James Reid Parker. New York: A. A. Wyn, Inc.* 1946. 214 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by JAMES P. WOOD

THE collection of *New Yorker* pieces which "The Pleasure Was Mine" offers is good, as the publisher points out, for convalescents or for travelers taking a long train ride. Others, the reasonably healthy and even the stationary, should be able to read them too, for they are pleasant to read.

The stories tell what James Reid Parker saw men do in Paris and heard others say in Bryant Park, or said himself to the earnest young man who asked to borrow the dramatic section of his *New York Times*, and what the salesmen told him when he stopped in at a tailor's for emergency repairs to his torn trousers.

They are simple stories, simply told, or made to seem so. The author is confiding but well mannered. He is tentative. If there is a touch of wonder and slight bewilderment, there is no complaint and scarcely any malice. The author went quietly about his business, and these odd incidents occurred, and these odd people pushed themselves on his notice. He tells about them.

Mr. Parker sees and hears accurately and reports nicely after selecting nicely the vagaries and more ridiculous normalities of the people he meets. Voyaging on a freighter, he is awarded a Reverend Mr. Howse for cabin companion. Mr. Howse had been sent by his congregation to "do a little beachcombing" for the sake of his health. He has a "game shoulder." He is very masculine and sings nautical songs.

As an A. U. S. major, the author goes to a small town in Illinois to watch some tests run off at an ordnance proving grounds. Nothing more is said of the tests. Much is said of aged Mary Conley, from whom he rents a room. Mary Conley has "a willful and capricious mind." Mr. Parker speaks directly of the people in his book, then lets them, speaking for themselves, say their own silliness.

It is not a kind method but Mr. Parker does not use it cruelly. His tales are amusing, quietly amusing. There is not an uproar in the lot. Their appeal is to the reader as a superior person sharing the humorous observations of another superior person on the inferior minds and manners of the eccentric, the affected, the inane, the inferior.

Of their kind these stories are very good indeed.



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# New Yorkers of the 1900's

*THE HOUSE ON THE PARK. By Marjorie Worthington. New York: Doubleday & Co. 1946. 327 pp. $2.75.*

Reviewed by SARA HENDERSON HAY

IN THE early 1900's the Mount Morris section of New York was an eminently respectable neighborhood, "inhabited by eminently respectable families who stabled their carriage horses a few blocks away and who lived pompously and fashionably. . . . They were not the New Yorkers of Ward McAllister's world . . . they were substantially middle class and formed a social world of their own, bounded by the shopping district of 125th Street to the north, Lenox Avenue to the west and Madison Avenue to the east."

The houses about Mount Morris Park were brownstone fronts, bulging with bay windows. Indoors they reflected the incredible tastes of the times. Not one but had its Turkish Corner, not one but was smothered in portieres, velvet draperies, lace curtains; crammed with ponderous furniture, bedecked with bric-a-brac, knick-knacks, curios, ornaments; hung with antimacassars. "Each of these houses was dominated by a stout matron trimmed in black jet, garnets, and 'bugles'. . ." and Mrs. Oberdunk was the stoutest, wealthiest and most dominating of the lot. The Oberdunks lived in the most bay-windowed, the most resplendent house in the Mt. Morris neighborhood. Mrs. Oberdunk ruled her household, she ruled the neighborhood, and she even had more than a finger in the management of her husband's Storage and Warehouse Business on 18th Street, for, unlike most ladies of the period, Mrs. Oberdunk had a shrewd business head on her feather-boaed shoulders.

There were two daughters in this family — Daisy, prim, thin, sedate, Daisy of the mousey blonde hair; and Maude, all curves and nods and becks and wreathed smiles, born for trouble and not averse to making it. Into the orbit of these two young ladies swam a new planet, one Gus Falkes, dashing, debonaire, man of the world whose past was just a bit shady and whose future was, to say the least, chancey. But Gus possessed such charm that even the wary Mrs. Oberdunk succumbed to it and allowed him to pay court to her daughters. Both the girls fell in love with Gus. But to everyone's surprise and to Maude's chagrin, it was the ladylike Daisy whom he married.

How the Oberdunks Sr. failed to make a conformist out of the handsome but incorrigible Gus, who preferred gambling and speculating in mining stocks to the security and tedium of a share in his father-in-law's business; how Daisy, whose hands held for a while passion and romance, opened her fingers; how Maude's wounded vanity and bitterness at losing Gus led her into two bad marriages and a disastrous affaire; how the blacksheep, obviously meant for each other from the start, finally get together—make up the plot of this period piece.

It is a good story, though the background and the minor incidents seem to have more authenticity and reality than the chief characters. It's like a movie excellently directed and with all the properties absolutely correct, but in which the actors lack a certain depth and breadth of characterization. The players play their parts, we follow the action and admire the sets and the costumes, and only when we come out of the theatre do we begin to question whether people would really have reacted in such and such a way, and to perceive how two-dimensional their portrayal was. But I am cavilling at a book which I enjoyed heartily. It has lightness, charm, and an unobtrusive, kindly satire. It is a glimpse of a vanished America, and those readers in particular who grew up in the plush and gas-light era, in the time when the sewing woman came and spent two or three weeks, when ladies wore corsets under their bathing suits and long black silk stockings and bathing shoes, and when eggs were twenty-five cents a dozen, will find its nostalgic flavor very appealing indeed.

# *Hymn for Halloween*

By Hassoldt Davis

I

THIS is the end of it, children I cherished;
This is the end of a dream that was blind.
This is the end of a dream which we nourished
Against a blind breast.

We must rest now, and dream of the rest of the stars.
Farther than heaven is hell and the haggard
Device of our cowardice.

Come, little laggards, come with me quickly,
And give me your hands, and we'll go a-wandering
Over the hills and away where the sands
Build their castles alone, and the elves
Whom we love, with their boots and their high hats
With tassels, can whistle expertly
And turn somersaults on the good dewy grass.

Look you, that lass whom I loved
And who mothered you, give her the love which is
Left in me; take her small hand and rejoin me,
As soon as you can.

II

This is our own Halloween; and this flesh in the sand,
The sand castles we've built on our arrogant bodies,
To cover us decently, laughing with sand in our eyes,
These await the good sandman to pat us in bed.

We must remember: these castles of sand on our hearts
Will be ours to inhabit and cherish
If ever the fierce ghosts of us, the old cannibal folk,
May quite swallow the embers of what life we lived.

Cover your hearts and your breasts,
Lest they thrust at a star.

Our sandman will soon be anointing our sand
With his sand, and our dust with his dust,
And we must be quiet now, laughing like shadows,
And dead.



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# *There Is No Middle Way*

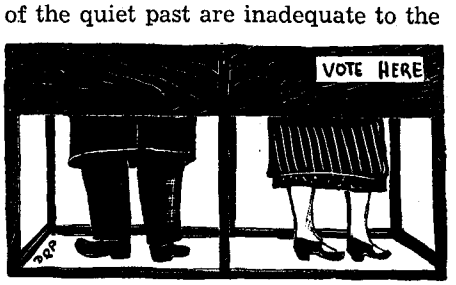
FELIX FRANKFURTER

THE magic of Oxford is not only a British possession. For nearly eight hundred years it has cast its spell wherever the writ of the humanities has run. We in the United States claim a special hold upon its beauty. Oxford has taught our citizens; it has inspired our scholars; it has given depth and breadth to our political and cultural heritage. But Oxford is not merely a group of lovely buildings where generations of teachers have handed on the torch of learning. It is a way of giving life to the word wherever the word is read or spoken. That is why the real democratizing of Oxford has been accomplished not by Acts of Parliament, nor even by great thinkers whose thoughts have overleapt its walls and crossed the Atlantic to these shores. The democratizing of Oxford has been accomplished by those who first made its books available to literate mankind. "A true university," said Carlyle, "is a library of books." In that sense, the Oxford Press in America has been a true university. For almost one-third of the life of this republic, it has shown a sense of responsibility toward the nourishing of the mind and spirit of our society which demands our recognition and gratitude. It has placed at our disposal not only the treasures of ancient learning in form appropriate to the treasures, but with audacious modesty, befitting its great tradition, it has given us insights into our own history, knowledge of our own literature, analysis of our own problems. One hundred and fourteen Fifth Avenue has a place beside Harvard and Yale, beside Princeton and Columbia, as a great center of fructifying thought.

No time is more appropriate than the present to salute that institution which has the secret of renewing its youth while it adds to its age. Democracy demands, as does no other form of society, that its citizens understand their institutions and their problems. Indeed, democracy is dependent upon the pervasiveness of such understanding among its citizens. I have heard Plato claimed as an Oxford man, and it was Plato who said that he judged a state by ascertaining whether the Minister of Education was more important than the Minister of War. The agonies through which we have passed and the agonies which still beset us give vivid meaning to Plato's judgment. We can no longer afford war. We can no longer afford mass insecurity. We can no longer afford the kind of aggression, whether internal or external, that makes power other than a means for the well-being of society, and society conceived as the whole of mankind. In the long run the remedy for these ills lies in education. We have passed the point in history when we can afford the misery of ignorance. We understand—or civilization as we have known it, and have dreamed it, will perish. There is no middle way.

In the years between the wars few things were more disturbing than the number of citizens who gave up the effort to understand our problems. In these years when we are building peace it is at least as disturbing that perhaps as many accept the picture of events made by men and women who have an interest in coloring it one way or another. It is immaterial whether the interest be that of dogma or of dollars. Education means the power to reduce the number of citizens who give up the effort of disinterested and responsible understanding to an unimportant proportion of the commonwealth. For where the effort is made, there citizens are found; and where citizens are found, responsibility is squarely forced upon a statesman to explain, if need be to justify, the policy he proposes. Democratic government may indeed be defined as the government which accepts in the fullest sense the responsibility to explain itself. It can operate successfully only when statesmen know not merely that they will be held to account for what they do, but that those who hold them to account can weigh facts and reflect upon their meaning. To equip citizens for this understanding and for the exercise of this responsibility, is, I venture to believe, the function of education in a democratic society.

And not the least aspect of education is to see that principles are adequate to changing needs. They have to take on fresh meaning if they are to meet the problems of changing times. Lincoln understood that and expressed it with a final simplicity in his Second Inaugural: "The dogmas of the quiet past are inadequate to the stormy present. The occasion is piled high with difficulty, and we must rise with the occasion. As our case is new, so we must think anew and act anew. We must disenthrall ourselves, and then we shall save our country." He spoke of the inadequacy of the "dogmas" of the past, not of truths that endure—the truths that express the conditions indispensable for the free spirit of man. Part of the secret of Oxford's eternal youth has been its power of creative adaptation. That is why its life has always been a tradition in America; it has also been a challenge. And this Press has published the ideas which make the challenge. Let us always remember that those who built the ideas were, in an essential way, citizens of the *civitas maxima* in which all the nations are no more than provinces. It is to their effort that we owe our freedom. Franklin Roosevelt was deeply conscious of that debt when he told the University of Pennsylvania: "Civilization owes most to the men and women, known and unknown, whose free, inquiring minds and restless intellects could not be subdued by the power of tyranny."




History has given special significance to those words since September 3, 1939. We have had experience that ought to make mankind never forget that power is not enough; we have also good reason to remember that no amount of scholarship will atone for the absence of wisdom. And wisdom comes when men and women have been so trained that not only is their thought free, but they themselves believe passionately that it ought to be free. If I may quote a Cambridge poet, it must have been of this freedom that Milton was thinking when he said "as good almost kill a man as kill a good book." It was the same poet who defined "a complete and generous education" as "that which fits a man to perform justly, skilfully and magnanimously all the offices, both private and public, of peace and war." It is not excessive to say that this has been the great end upon which Oxford at her highest has always been set. Certainly it is right to affirm that in its fulfillment the Press has played an honorable and indispensable part. The Press has brought the University out of the cloister and enabled it to radiate its influence everywhere. The Press has made the wisdom of those whom Oxford has taught and who have taught her part of the central heritage of all mankind.

*The foregoing article was delivered as an address at the recent dinner in New York which marked the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of the American branch of the Oxford University Press.*



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## GROWING PAINS

ON the surface the American people are enduring a state of affluence in time of peace. The income of individuals has mounted to the colossal figure of 167 billions a year, 58 millions are employed and are spending out of earnings and savings 126 billion a year. Industrial production, profits from farms and businesses, are the highest in our history. The ten million veterans who today have found jobs are a denial of the wartime prophecies that they would by now be engaged in selling apples on street corners. We have won the Second World War, our enemies are as prostrate as we hoped they would be, and we are hanging and sentencing their war leaders and criminals as fast as international courts of justice can convict them. As a nation we possess vast military and naval strength, and we alone hold and continue to manufacture the most destructive weapon man has invented. We are the richest and most powerful of nations.

But already this rapid summary of our blessings seems stale and profitless, as if the end of hostilities a year and a few months ago had only served to plague us with a host of fears and neurotic ailments, as though we could only be strong and united in times of adversity and danger. A single issue of a city newspaper reveals the mounting burden of our woes. Crime and divorce are increasing; thousands of families are still homeless; prices are steadily climbing; meat, sugar, and other necessities are scarce; the stock market has steadily fallen. We are frightened at a strong foreign policy and afraid of a weak one. We are at the same time belligerent about Russia, and worried at the intransigence with which she continues to dominate the nations around her vast perimeter. We boast about the strength of democratic institutions and secretely tremble at the idea of communism. We are handling the atomic bomb, to quote a caustic British journalist, "like a nervous, hysterical girl holding a hand grenade, not knowing when it will go off and not knowing what to do with it."

We are beginning to reveal the beginnings of a guilt complex that any psychiatrist will identify with the strain of puritanism that always lies under the surface of American behavior and thought. It was revealed after the First World War in the softening of our attitude toward Germany in the early twenties and our increasing distrust of the restrictive clauses of the Versailles Treaty, as if in some way we had to apologize to the Germans for having defeated them. It is showing itself now in the growing feeling that it was criminal of us to have used the atomic bomb at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. You can also see it, if you care to look, in the indulgent and kindly manner with which so many who have been to Japan since it has been occupied now look at that apparently docile, charming, and patient people. The ape-like, long-toothed savages familiar in the wartime cartoons are becoming once more the picturesque and friendy little people we admired and neglected to worry about a few years ago.

You will look in vain among the responsible spokesmen to the British, or Heaven knows, the Russians for expressions of regret and doubt of this nature. This delicate post-facto squeamishness is a cherished possession of this country alone. We need not apologize for it, since it does not function only during the brutality of great wars. Our moral uneasiness about slavery was one of the causes for the Civil War and South and North our conscience is alive to the condition of the Negro in our society today. Certainly no nation is more easily aroused to injustices and suffering around the world. It is only human nature that we prefer to have them as far away as possible so that we will try to feed a starving Hindu before we feel compelled to come to the relief of a sharecropper down South or a dispossessed Japanese out West. At least we seem to run little risk of ever becoming inwardly complacent as a country. It is no wonder that foreign observers who do not know us well are always confusing the outward symptom of our dissatisfaction with life with weakness and disunion. It would be interesting to study some day the reports in German and Japanese archives that led their diplomats and their bosses to the conviction that we were so turbulent and divided that we could be defeated in the Second World War. We have always had the gift of misleading our prospective enemies, though that is no reason why we should continue to fool ourselves.

It would be absurd to say that there is nothing to be alarmed about. We still live in a revolutionary and a sick world, in which almost anything can happen at any moment. But most of these manifestations of our restfulness are the result of the pains of growth and change. You can never ask of Americans that they should be satisfied with what they have won for themselves or what has been given to them. We must always want to have more and to know more. When we have acted ruthlessly to save ourselves, we are sorry, as a boy is when he has struck his friend in a fight. We have in some ways never grown up to the sedate, adult behavior of the European who has always had to weigh his decisions in time of peace against a host of fears and old inhibitions. We have always lacked reserve, always been youthful. Let us hope that we may never change.

H. S.

## *September Signal*

**By Joseph Hirsh**

WHEN drowsy days give way
To nights a little edged with chill and hoar,
'Tis time to note the warning signs
So subtly spaced:
The long hiatuses in song;
A smudge of blood-rust in the field;
The poplars and the beeches changing cloaks—
Patriarchal and gold;
The honeyed arms of other trees upturned,
To counsel some to flight
And some to pause.
Then on a single day, it seems
They raise their fiery arms to signal stop.
The interlude of green is gone.



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# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## The Public Should Know

SIR: I have just finished reading the exciting and delicious piece by William L. White in *SRL* of October 5. The reason I did not read it sooner was that I have been sailing in Nantucket.

I am no authority on the merits of what Russia is. I have never been there, but I must say that I think that White missed the main point in so far as the American impact on the controversy. I am not opposed to legions of decency. I think organized groups perform a service when they stand up as critics and advisers to the American public with respect to movies, plays, or even crass commodities. I am deeply concerned, however, with the fact that these organized groups, whether working on sexual or political lines, or whether even the political lines stem from a sexual base, are increasingly operating through stealth and anonymity. I think Bill White should tell us, if he knows, who put up the money to run the campaign against his book. I think the American Communists have a perfect right to run such a campaign and to spend thousands of dollars thereon but I think the public has a right to know who put up the money, who sent the cables, who organized the pressure on the publishers, who put the heat on the reporters, etc. In other words, aren't we entitled to know if people who are not in favor of our Bill of Rights and freedom of the press are using that doctrine in order to destroy it in the United States? I should imagine that the American people will adhere to the doctrine that the First Amendment to the Constitution negates the need for anonymity.

Maybe your magazine can smoke out these underground groups. Right or Left, Communist or Fascist, which are afraid to stand out in the open, which taint democracy through stealth, and which could not survive in our folkway if there were full disclosure as to their finances, activities, and real hidden bosses.

MORRIS ERNST.

New York, N. Y.

## "Laylocks" Again

SIR: Lilacs are just as beautiful and smell just as sweet whatever the pronunciation.

As one lady here on Cape Cod whose lovely hedge of lilacs I was admiring this spring remarked, with proud apology, "The laylocks is scurce this year."

As President Coolidge once said to his wife, "Well, you knew what she meant." I did.

G. D.

Hyannis, Mass.

## Pretty Names

SIR: I agree with Max Beerbohm (*SRL* Sept. 21) and with your correspondent who quoted him that often the words we find caressing to the ear are so rather from their connotations than from their euphony; and that, on the other hand, there are always in lists of disagreeable words several which we should find harmonious if it were not for their meanings. "Pneumonia" is a particularly pleasant word, to my ear, and one of the loveliest names I have ever heard was that of a maid in my aunt's house in Memphis, Tenn. Her name was Newmonia Durling.

The late Ring Lardner considered Perley Boone the prettiest name he ever encountered, and he was an ardent collector of pretty names. Mr. Boone is a newspaperman, who was once city editor of the Chicago *Tribune* (while Ring worked there) and later was publicizer for the World's Fair at Flushing Meadows.

I never quite agreed with Ring on lovely names, my own favorite, for a long time, being Wellington Koo. But the one that now heads my list is Diggory Venn, recently appointed publicity director for Houghton Mifflin Co. Second on my list was Dagobert D. Runes, until I learned that Dr. Runes pronounces his name Runess. I thought it was pronounced Roons, like the word for Norse poetry written in the runic alphabet. Ru-ness is not as sweet-sounding to me as roons.

And, by the way, Wilfred J. Funk, who started all this discussion, has one of the least melodious names I ever heard. But possibly I think so because the components of Mr. Funk's name have unpoetic connotations. Wilfred is the sort of first name which writers of burlesque skits used to give the baggy-pants comic with a small red electric light bulb attached to his nose, which he would flash on and off; it was supposed to be such an inappropriate name as to be very funny. "J" is like the "Q" in Norman Anthony's Pheneas Q. Zilch, Oscar Zilch's high-toned Boston relation. And Funk connotes a state of mind which I am sure the learned Dr. Wilfred J. never gets into.

It distresses me that my own last name, spelled with an "o" instead of an "a" in the first syllable, is gunman's slang for an automatic pistol and is also supposed by comic writers to be almost as funny as Rochester when used as a first name for a Negro comedian.

BURTON RASCOE.

New York, N. Y.

## Hymns of Hate

SIR: How heavenly 'twould be to say
"Good-night!"
Once and forever to "forthright."

H. PALMER.

Norwich, Connecticut.

SIR: They use it much but not ideally,
That ever over-rated "really."
I fix him with an eye gone steely
Who further errs and calls it "reel-y."

DOROTHY BURNHAM EATON.

Newtonville, Mass.

SIR: Crum-bums I would like to see
boiled in fat
Are those who exclaim: "How *about* that!"

FREDERICK V. FELL.

New York, N. Y.

SIR: A shiver crinkles adown my
spine
When I'm told that my friends
Are *feeling fine.*

MARY HAMES.

Des Moines, Iowa.

SIR: Would someone with an idle gun
Do a job for me?
Shoot the next offender
Who wants a "look-*see.*"

EMOLYN G. COHN.

Croton-on-Hudson, N. Y.

THROUGH HISTORY WITH J. WESLEY SMITH

**"There is enough melancholy in the world, Mr. Poe. Did you ever try your hand at whimsy?"**



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# Seeing Things

## GENTLEMEN OF THE PRESS

FROM the millions of words spoken as dialogue in new American plays during the last quarter of a century, a few sentences here and there refuse to be forgotten. Most of the others, even when they have done their nightly duty as flares, have been swallowed up in the darkness.

The lines I have in mind are different. Beauty is not their strong point. Neither is wit, eloquence, profundity, nor, as a rule, reverence. Yet they have stuck in the memories of playgoers. They have lodged there as summaries and as tags; as vivid reminders of past pleasures. What is more, they have hung on with the insistence of slogans.

Any theatregoer of fair constancy and of a certain age can place them at once. The stagestruck find them as readily identifiable as schoolboys do such military nifties as "We have met the enemy and they are ours," "Don't give up the ship," "Damn the torpedoes!" "You may fire when ready, Gridley," "LaFayette, we are here," or, as spoken at Bastogne, just plain "Nuts." For that matter they are as spottable as such Presidential declarations as "Speak softly and carry a Big Stick," "I do not choose to run," "Too proud to fight," "The return to normalcy," or "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself."

Many of the lines which ring bells immediately in the minds of playgoers are mere phrases. "Dat ole davil sea," for instance. Or "Sign on the dotted line," "I belong, dat's me," "The mountains of Nebraska," or "It's only Mother."

Some—such as "Gangway for de Lord God Jehovah," or (a long pause, please) "I may vomit"—served as memorable entrance cues. Others—such as "Eleven o'clock in Grover's Corners. You get a good rest, too. Good night," and "No! I'm going to be baptized, damn it!"—ended evenings of rare delight.

Among all such lines, I doubt if any have proved more adhesive than those which rang down the curtain on two of the twenties' rowdiest successes. One of these was, of course, the ebullient, "Hey, Flagg, wait for baby!" with which Laurence Stallings and Maxwell Anderson concluded "What Price Glory?" The other left audiences gasping and roaring when the late Osgood Perkins barked it into a telephone. It ran, (and still runs, because "The Front Page"* has recently been revived), "The son of a bitch stole my watch!"

This last gun in Ben Hecht's and Charles MacArthur's newspaper comedy came as a jubilant climax to a merry melodrama. It capped the barrage of surprises which eighteen years ago had kept all of us laughing and startled for the whole of a noisy, fast-moving evening. It was a *coup de théâtre*; unexpected, and as hard-boiled as the play. It showed us the true character of the managing editor Mr. Perkins acted to perfection. It was his trick to win back to Chicago newspaperdom the star reporter who had dared to fall in love, dared to go on a honeymoon, dared to think of becoming an advertising man in New York.

The editor had just given the newly married reporter the watch in question as a present. The two men, long friends, had, after squabbling sacrilegiously, enjoyed an almost sentimental moment of reconciliation before parting. Yet, no sooner had the reporter and his bride left for the station, than the editor stepped to the telephone. He had hesitated for an instant and heaved a huge sigh. Managing editor though he was, he was at least that human. Then he had proceeded to growl his instructions to his henchman.

"Listen," he had said, "I want you to send a wire to the Chief of Police of LaPorte, Indiana. . . . That's right. . . . Tell him to meet the twelve-forty out of Chicago . . . New York Central . . . and arrest Hildy Johnson and bring him back here. . . . Wire him a full description. . . . The son of a bitch stole my watch!"

Time is the best of all shock absorbers. It can turn a scandalized "Oh!" into an accepting "So!" within an unbelievably small number of years. "The Front Page," when seen —and heard—today, remains a far, far better play than most. One of the proofs of its skill is that its excellences as a script cannot be obscured by the less than indifferent performance to which it is just now being subjected. It is stoutly built. And, what matters more, it is peopled by an entertaining group of characters; hardboiled members of the Fourth Estate who breathe to swear and swear at every breath.

*THE FRONT PAGE, by Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur. Staged by Mr. MacArthur. Designed by Nat Karson. Presented by Hunt Stromberg, Jr., and Thomas Spengler. With Arnold Moss, Lew Parker, Benny Baker, Edward H. Robins, Cora Witherspoon, William Lynn, etc. At the Royale Theatre.*

—*Talbot.*

**"To their authors these profane newshawks are . . . King Arthurs whose scandal-dripping typewriters are their Excaliburs."**

To their authors these profane newshawks are obviously the most glamorous of figures. They see them as D'Artagnans in modern dress; as King Arthurs whose scandal-dripping typewriters are their Excaliburs; as Robin Hoods defying the Sheriff, not of Nottingham but of Cook County, in the Press Room of Chicago's Criminal Courts Building. Their lack of sentiment is what makes their creators feel sentimental about them. They are enchanted with their disenchantment. So, may I add, are we.

That these curmudgeons of the press use the language colorfully, no one can deny. Even so, the "tough-guy" speech, which they sport as romantically as Cyrano flourished his plume, no longer astonishes us. The intervening years have robbed the oaths of "The Front Page" of their novelty. The dialogue now tires us at times by its striving, instead of amazing us throughout by its daring.

IF ever realism swaggered as romance, or romance masqueraded as realism, it is in Mr. Hecht's and Mr. MacArthur's melodrama. "The Front Page" was the work—more accurately, the play—of two young men who were described by their original producer, Jed Harris, as "the Katzenjammer Kids of the theatre." Their lightheartedness was the measure of their own youth and of the times in which they were lucky enough to be young. This is what Brooks Atkinson meant when, in his review of the present revival, he said, "Today it



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would be difficult for anybody to write anything so gay in spirit."

As important to any creative work as what is included in it is what is left out. The point of choice is indeed the point where art begins. Darwin may have championed natural selection, but the creative processes depend upon a selection which, regardless of how inevitable it may seem in the finished product, discards irrelevances and chooses with a definite and quite arbitrary purpose in mind.

Often, in a piece of writing as lusty as "The Front Page," there is more to the play than is captured in the dialogue or suggested in the action. The very omissions speak for themselves. Mr. Hecht's and Mr. MacArthur's melodrama is based on the assumptions and the attitudes of the Prohibition era. Its tone is tough with a toughness born of those times. Its spirit is jaunty, immature, untroubled. It is written with a lightness of heart which, tragically, may be no longer possible but with a worship of the "lowdown" which, fortunately, has become as dated as it is discredited. Though tamer than it once was, "The Front Page" has, as a script, outlasted the days of its writing. It has become a period piece only because it so successfully captures the feeling of its period.

It was George S. Kaufman who first staged the melodrama. He performed a difficult task with a drive which kept the play cracking like a snake-whip in action. The group scenes, where a stageful of reporters must be given their individual chances to talk "tough," were timed with a precision calculated to win a Swiss clockmaker's envy. Everything was kept moving at so insistent a rate that, until the text was published, no one could be certain how self-reliant the

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script would prove as a play when unaided by its staging.

One of the disquieting faults of the present revival is that it makes us realize the virtues of the writing merely by granting them no assistance. To those never fortunate enough to have seen "The Front Page" before, and who do not keep seeing and hearing Osgood Perkins and Lee Tracy in it now, the comedy may seem satisfying enough. I say "may," though I gravely doubt it. I know only that I found this performance a dreary, inept affair; miscast, slouchily acted; and lacking, above all, in the fire and the precision needed to do the script justice.

In Mr. Tracy's part of the incurable reporter, Lew Parker acts with more effort than effect. He manages to skid on a dry road. His characterization is smudged and blurred, when it cries out loud to be clean and definite. Arnold Moss is totally lost in Osgood Perkin's shoes. Mr. Moss is an excellent classic actor. His Prospero in last year's "Tempest" made this clear. Yet, as should go without saying, almost every characteristic of voice, gesture, and mind which distinguished him in Shakespeare is misplaced in his impersonation of a tough Chicago newshawk. The late Henry Van Dyke trying to write like Ernest Hemingway could not possibly have been more at a loss.

Much as I admire "The Front Page" as a newspaper play, in the presence of the current slow-paced and amateurish revival I found I had one wish uppermost in my mind. I kept wanting to rush to the telephone in the manner of their managing editor, and warn Mr. Hecht and Mr. MacArthur that someone backstage—I only said "someone"—had stolen their watch.

JOHN MASON BROWN.

# *Let's Behoove*

By Melville Cane

("This diplomatic penetration of Latin American by Moscow is not necessarily bad, or alarming. But it would seem to behoove the United States to keep in good repair its own diplomatic fences." *The New York Times* editorial.)

THOUGH there may be no harm
In this Soviet move,
And no cause for alarm
And no ground for distress,
Still, nevertheless,
It would seem to behoove,
It's the obvious time to behoove us.

Though the Gaucho and Russ
Seek legitimate trade,
And their posture toward us
Be as pure as the dove,
Yet, it can't be gainsaid,
It would seem to behoove
That the moment's at hand to behoove us.

Though we far from suspect
Any mischievous scheme,
And we fail to detect
Any evidence grave,
Just in case—it would seem
(Though of course they'll behave)
That we'd better begin to behoove us.



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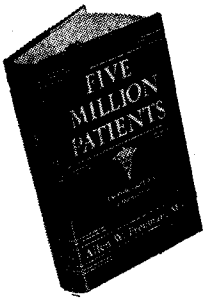

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## THE ANATOMY OF COOPERATION

(*Continued from page 10*)

thing definite about the basis and growth of that philosophy.

### Marxist Philosophy[1]

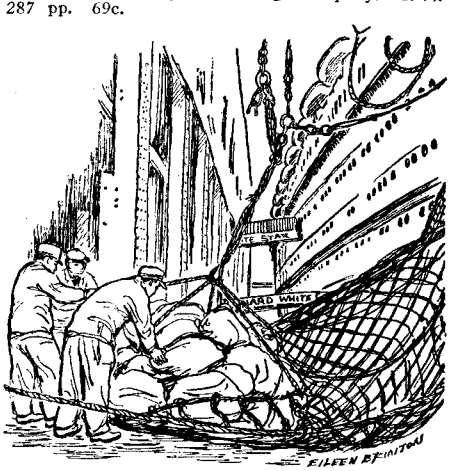
Probably no other social revolutionary has had a philosophical grounding equal to that of Marx. He was a devoted student of Hegel—not, however, the later Hegel who tried to twist his philosophy into the glorification of the Prussian State. He was much more aware of the importance of philosophy than many of his critics, although he never held himself out as a professional philosopher.

The course of history, Marx asserted, is determined by the action and reaction of economic factors on the individual. All systems of morality, social relations, and culture spring from the current economic base of the particular society in question. Such systems may then react on the economic structure and modify it. In turn, the economic structure, as so modified, will then change the ideals, morals, and culture. The real wellspring is man's economic desire.

Every widespread historical tendency, he further asserted, produces a contrary force. This force eventually emerges victorious and a synthesis of the two produces a new stage or tendency. Feudalism generated its own opposition, which in due course overcame it and resulted in capitalism. Capitalism, similarly, contains the seeds of its own destruction and the result will be communism. (Marx used the term "socialism," but the other term is more common today.) This will be *automatic*, as all good Communists today believe; yet it must be worked for.

The last statement seems to involve a basic contradiction. If capitalism *must* turn into communism, why should anyone strive to bring it about?

[1]Modern Political Philosophies. By Louis Wasserman. Garden City Publishing Company. 1944. 287 pp. 69c.




Marx endeavored to solve this, I believe, by his position on free will and determinism. He denied that men and women had the power to think, and choose between, abstractions. He did grant them, however, the power to choose between two economic pressures bearing on them.

The point is difficult, but basic. Perhaps the following illustration will clarify it without being too misleading or too superficial. The proletariat finds itself being forced to a lower and lower economic standard. They perceive that the State is the instrument which the dominant class uses to enforce this condition. They will then be driven, by forces beyond her control, to one of two courses. They may try to emigrate from the State or to seize the power of the State for themselves. This choice they may make. If they make the former, they are delaying the eventually certain appearance of communism. If they succeed in the latter, they have hastened it. Incidentally, having seized the State, they can choose what laws they think will best ameliorate their economic condition. (In doing so, they will pay due attention to education, science, and art, since they recognize that economics does not operate in a vacuum.)

They could not, however, sit down and plan out an ideal morality on which a state could be built that would produce a better, but non-communistic, economic structure. That would be choosing an abstraction, and the power of free will does not extend that far.

### The Practical Application

In 1919, the vast majority of the Russian people lived at subsistence level, or in actual terror of starvation. A tiny fraction was enormously wealthy. There was a very small middle class and a few small land-owners. The internal economy had broken down; the Four Years' War was going badly for Russia.

At this point, the Bolsheviks seized control, made peace, and offered (perhaps "forced" is a better word) the Marxist system as the basic system. What results would one naturally expect?

You would expect the wealthy minority to resist it violently, and to be liquidated. The vast majority, who, like the lowest paid workers in any organization, are primarily concerned with keeping alive, would accept it readily if it produced more food and clothes. Many of the middle class and small land-owners would object and



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would have to be coerced. And that is just about what did happen.

The interesting class, however, were the new leaders—members of the Communist Party, whose number at that time was probably around one million. How would you expect them to react to their new-found power? Could organizational discipline be maintained? It would be quite natural to expect that the new-found power would go to their heads, or at least produce schisms based on varying views of the individual's right to live his own life.

Discipline was maintained, partly by giving prestige, partly by money rewards, but it is possible that the key factor was the belief of the members that they had no choice but to carry out the organizational purpose. Because of this belief, the "problems of moral complexity" which appear so quickly in American organizations were minimized. There was a simple organization goal: to make the system work and protect it from outside attack. The leaders toward this goal were kept busy arguing which economic course was best. They did not believe men could choose about such abstractions as personal liberty and freedom of art, so they did not miss them.

The whole process was enormously solidified by the threat of war, and probably by the war itself. With so simple and understandable a goal as winning a war, even our own contentious people pulled together pretty well for four years. The Russians naturally solidified their position. But the real issue for the Russians will begin when they have recovered their full economic strength, when every Russian has a reasonable economic standard of living.

### Why Communism Will Change or Collapse

If any lessons can be drawn from history, one that seems clearest is that when people obtain any kind of economic security, the non-economic problems begin to rise in importance. This is particularly true if the people are educated, and have access to conflicting ideas (which the Russians at the moment do not appear to have). But even when merely given leisure to think (which they will have) the ego begins to assert itself, the desire for individual freedom and adventure sprouts, complete subordination to the organization purpose becomes unsatisfactory. The more rapidly communism achieves its economic goals, the sooner that condition will arise.

When it does arise, the problems of increasing moral complexity will fly thick and fast. For there will be little or no previous experience in dealing

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with them. The materialist determinism of Marx will, unless all history misleads us, be a peculiarly unsatisfactory guide to solutions. Either a new philosophy will be found, which would profoundly alter communism as we know it today, or chaos will result. In short, communism will either change or collapse.

It might be noted that this would be quite in accord with Marx's theories of history. If every historical tendency generates its own destruction, communism must today contain the seeds of its own overthrow. Possibly Marx would have admitted this, despite his Utopian view of the perfect communist state. You do not, however, find the present Politburo dwelling on this phase of his philosophy.

Lest anyone think this prediction is the voice of a Pollyanna crying in the present wilderness of fear and despair, let me stress one point. The change might, indeed, be to that Utopian society which Marx predicted. But it might also be a change or collapse that would enormously intensify the problems of western man.

A complete, chaotic collapse might

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carry down all Western civilization with it. A change to an out-and-out military dictatorship, whose leaders had inwardly abandoned Marx's humanitarianism and retained the hammer and sickle only as a symbol to delude the masses, might bring about a devastating war. Such a war would be more shattering than the Moslem invasion, and have far more destructive results.

There exists one reasonably possible hopeful solution. It depends very largely on the future course of action of the people of the United States of America.

### Back to the Basic Problem

The present trend of the Western world is toward larger and larger organization. We have billion-dollar corporations, labor unions with hundreds of thousands of members, political parties with millions of voters. The League of Nations and the United Nations are examples of attempts to build still larger organizations. Unfortunately, we have to try these out before we have learned how to deal with the problems of much smaller organization, as the first part of this article pointed out. But we have this much advantage. The real nature of the problems is beginning to be understood.

Furthermore, a philosophy, morality, system of thought—call it what you will—capable of dealing with those problems appears to be in process of development. This is not the place to discuss the signs of that development. But one fact might be mentioned. When it does develop we shall find we owe a considerable debt to a class of people whom the *intelligentsia* now tend to decry.

I refer to the group of industrialists, engineers, practical scientists, and the like, who, by a tremendous concentration on material things, have produced the technology which will be able to support two billion people at reasonable economic standards. This group is now frowned upon in many quarters. It is pointed out that material progress has been accomplished at the price of moral bankruptcy. This view overlooks one important consideration.

No society can put up with a morality which it cannot support technologically. Here is a simple example, although not particularly apposite. In our country today a man may choose to do little or no work. This may be due to the fact that he has inherited an income or that he is willing to live in poverty. In either case he is not considered immoral by the great mass of the people. (A few thinkers, such as Bernard Shaw, insist that anyone who takes more out of society than he produces is a criminal just as much as the thief and the robber.)

Now consider the situation of a

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Following our report of the death of *Successful Living*, we feel compelled to mention the birth of *Death Magazine*. We also wish to register our disapproval of the title. Inspite of the editors' explanation of it, it still seems to us to be psychologically all wrong. "By calling our magazine *Death*, we really mean life," say the editors. "The first sense of life must come from the awareness of Death. . . . Death serves as a springboard to life." Obviously, they couldn't call the magazine *Life*, but we do think that this is carrying a disguise too far. There is enough gloom in the world today without labeling life "death." Pollyanna that we are, we'll have no copy of *Death Magazine* lying around our living room!—*The Pleasures of Publishing, Columbia University Press.*


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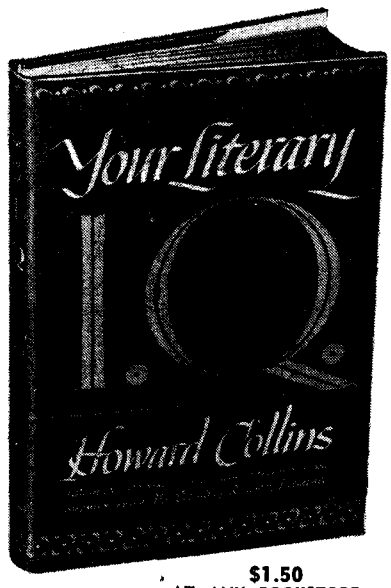


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little band of pioneers organizing a new state. Assume that the utmost cooperative effort is required of every member in order to survive; that if one member shirks, the lives of all are endangered. What, then, would be the moral view of anyone who asserted his "right" to be idle? You may be sure that all the other members would take the Shavian view.

Therefore, if we are to have a philosophy, or morality, which takes into account economic rights, as well as political and social rights, we must be able to support it. Today, we can, or at least we could, with the application of intelligence. But the new philosophy could not have been born without the preceding materialist effort. Perhaps, when this is understood, both the materialists and their detractors will be more tolerant of each other.

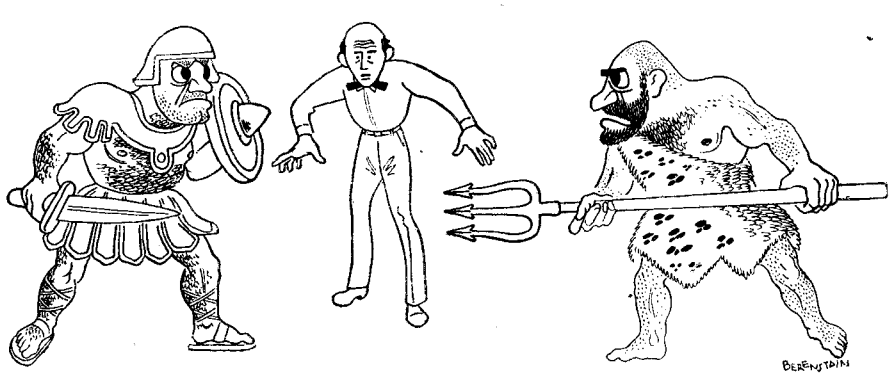
TO return to the main proposition we find at last the entire Western world dividing into two groups, both desperately trying to solve the problem of cooperative organization. One great group, led by Soviet Russia, is attempting to do it on the basis of Marxist philosophy. The other group, of which the United States is certain to be the leader, denies the Marxist philosophy, but at the moment has no very clear philosophy of its own. This is both a weakness and a strength. On the basis of historical evidence it seems certain that a new philosophy will be needed, and our very uncertainty may increase our open-mindedness. Our people have great flexibility of mind; we have freedom of thought and freedom of press; unless we become more than usually pig-headed, we should solve the problem ahead of the rest.

For solve it someone must. When the basic questions were only the academic playthings of the medieval schoolmen, it was unimportant whether answers could be found. Today our daily bread may depend on finding a solution.

Of course, there is always the possibility that both sides will destroy each other before the solution is reached. There are still far too many people who believe that if you can knock the other man down, you have proved your point of view. In international affairs, this doctrine means a war. Incidentally, it is a doctrine which has had great appeal to dictators and demagogues for hundreds of years.

Such a war would be idiotic almost beyond belief, when you consider not only the destruction involved, but also that both sides would avowedly be seeking the same ideal. Unfortunately, it has a prior parallel. There was a time when Protestants and Catholics, both claiming they had the only key to man's eternal salvation, slaughtered each other ruthlessly to enforce "the will of God." Therefore, unless we can learn from the mistakes of the past, two modern groups, both claiming the only key to man's happiness on earth, may have to go through the same process before they discover that it is possible to live together.

If there is any single thing which might avert this disaster, it is the development of a *rationale* capable of resolving the complex problems of cooperative organization. Neither side will find this, it appears, without modifying their present philosophical, political, and economic conceptions. But when the time comes where it seems clear, to the great majority of people, that one or the other side has been successful in this quest, that side will sweep the whole world before it. Only a handful of people will be left who will be willing to fight for the outworn systems. And when you have only a small number of people who refuse to accept the rules of the vast majority, you have a criminal problem, but not a war. The criminals may be dangerous, particularly in a world of atomic bombs and poison germs. But they cannot destroy civilization. Despite Napoleon's positive assertion, it may or may not be true that God fights on the side with the heaviest artillery. History indicates that He certainly fights on the side with the most efficient cooperative organization.



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# Belgium Between Wars

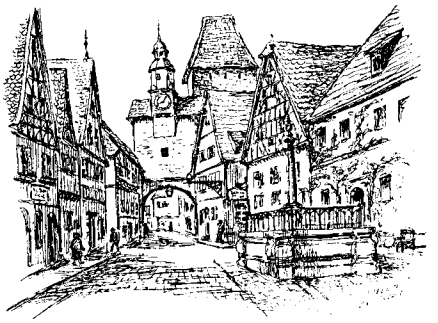
*THE BRIDGE OF YEARS. By May Sarton. New York: Doubleday & Co. 1946. 342 pp. $2.75.*

Reviewed by GRACE FRANK

MISS SARTON'S novel spans the period between 1919 and 1940 as it was lived on the outskirts of Brussels by a thoughtful Belgian family and their friends. The book begins with the aftermath of the first German occupation, thus touching on some of our own post-war problems; it ends as the second invasion sweeps nearer and nearer.

But the significant events of these years of peace in which so many seeds of war quietly germinated concern Miss Sarton chiefly as they affect the lives of her protagonists, the Duchesnes. On the surface little happens. Mélanie Duchesne holds the family together, physically and spiritually. She directs the suburban farm with its servants, crops, and animals on which they all live; she also manages an interior decorating firm in town from which they occasionally draw some added sustenance. Above all she gives strength and solace to her temperamental husband, Paul, to her three differing children, and to everyone in their circle who has need of her.

Yet the neighboring menace of Germany can seldom be forgotten. Nationalism, burgeoning abroad, soon infects the Flemish movement in Belgium. One of the younger generation turns communist; another fosters an anti-Semitic movement in the university. At one point Mélanie sadly reflects that although her own youth was spent in a relatively secure age where progress seemed inevitable, her children must needs live



in a world savage with hatred, spiritually and economically depleted.

Mélanie, however, keeps her integrity throughout. She has faith and resourcefulness, courage and sanity; her character finds expression in action. Yet her serenity is sometimes deceptive. When her moody, irascible husband, detached and immersed in his writing, seemingly puts her out of his life, she suffers. She suffers too when Paul in his unhappiness turns elsewhere for intimate self-revelation and thus furthers a sentimental attachment which he actually does not desire. She must often combat his all-pervading sense of failure and keep alive not only his belief in himself but her own faith in him. This marriage, on the whole so successful, nevertheless spells frustration for each partner at times.

Miss Sarton understands the lonely inviolability of the individual and the universal need for love without bondage. She also understands the eternal dilemma of those torn between the life of the spirit and life as it must be lived on a more human plane. A large part of her book concerns the younger generation, and the author sensitively enters into the tremendous joys and woes of these children. Perhaps by focusing so much attention on the youngsters she somewhat disappoints us in the end because their stories necessarily remain incomplete and their problems, though reflecting the world about them, never achieve a compelling maturity.

Here in any case is a beautifully wrought book, deeply felt and significant in theme. Its deceptive simplicity may not appeal to the average movie-fed audience, but it will offer much quiet pleasure to those who appreciate delicacy of thought and a subtle approach to varying human emotions.

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# HEARING THINGS

## A REJOINDER ON OPERA

THIS department has been the recipient of many communications requesting more information about opera. One thought, or rather question, seems to agitate a number of our readers; they reproach the administrator of these columns as cherishing a *parti pris* for Italian opera (which according to our present-day "standards" is strictly grade B) and cannot understand why we cling tenaciously to such antiquated stuff in the face of the splendor of the German music drama. Nothing would please us more than to discuss this subject, because opera has been the life-blood of music since the seventeenth century; ever since that time the musical fortunes of many countries have depended in large measure on their relationship to opera. With the advent of the Baroque, virtually built around opera, some of the great musical nations, such as England and the Netherlands, which did not take to opera gradually disappeared from the scene, while the Italians, whose country produced opera, became the incontestable rulers of music.

Around 1700 Europe was an Italian colony as far as music was concerned. Almost every royal and princely court had an Italian opera troupe complete with Italian composers, conductors, singers, architects, machinists, stage designers, and prop men. They were in evidence everywhere, and every central European princeling who ruled over a domain the size of six city blocks dreamed of having a little Versailles of his own in which the opera house was to be the chief attraction.

Italian supremacy lasted well into the first third of the nineteenth century, and it is interesting to note that even Wagner's immediate predecessors in his conductorial posts were still Italians. However, this is not surprising, for at the opening of the nineteenth century there was neither German opera nor operatic traditions, whereas the Italians looked back upon two centuries of both. Aside from a few unsuccessful adventures in "serious" opera the Germans had only their *Singspiel*, a "song-play" *with* music and spoken dialogues. Mozart's "Magic Flute" is the finest example of this type of the lyric stage, but of course Mozart was an Austrian brought up on Italian opera, whose work towers above those of his fellow German Singspiel composers. All this is not said in order to belittle the eighteenth-century Singspiel, for this genre has many engaging and thoroughly enjoyable specimens, unfortunately unknown to our public, accustomed as we are to grandiloquent opera. Still, the Singspiel is a lesser variety of opera, as is the opéra comique and every other type that is not "thorough-composed," by which term is meant a dramatic musical fabric which follows the text faithfully and attempts to translate into music the protagonists' characters and feelings as they unfold in the course of the play.

Did it ever occur to the champions of the supremacy of German opera to look around and take stock? What is there besides Wagner, three of Strauss's operas, and "Hansel und Gretel," which is a pleasant enough pseudo-Wagnerian music drama in which the quarrelsome gods of Valhalla and the awe-inspiring armed maidens of the saga are reduced to the amiable figures of a fairy tale? After that there is nothing. Some of the operatic lights of the nineteenth century—Cornelius, Götz, Wolf—are totally unknown to Americans as opera composers and little more in Germany itself. As for the older opera, from Kaiser and Handel to Mozart, the successful German opera composers were those who embraced the Italian musical faith, and then they were feted as the greatest masters of Italian opera, while Gluck was to all intents and purposes a French composer with an Italian past. From the earlier part of the nineteenth century there are only two operas before Wagner's "Flying Dutchman" that are still alive: Beethoven's "Fidelio" and Weber's "Freischütz." Both of these are, however, of the Singspiel type, albeit of operatic proportions. "Fidelio" follows Cherubini's "international" operatic idiom but "Freischütz" is German to the core. Spohr, Marschner, and others are known by name only.

Nothing remains of French opera either. The Great Baroque composers, Lully and Rameau, are as forgotten as are Handel and Scarlatti, and the delightful opéra comique shares the ignorance lavished on the Singspiel.



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The opera of the Revolution and of the Napoleonic era lives only in certain scenes of "Rienzi," the "Flying Dutchman," and "Lohengrin," and Berlioz is unpalatable as an opera composer even to the French. The great contribution of France in the Romantic era was the "grand opera" of Meyerbeer (who, incidentally, was a Prussian Jew), a genre the shadow of which has rested heavily on opera ever since. In the second half of the century Gounod, Thomas, Delibes, Chabrier, and Massenet acquired a world-wide reputation for French opera with their elegant, perfumed, lyric, but largely undramatic and unconvincing works, written with an expert hand but shunning real passion and abandon. There is one single opera in this era which is a masterpiece no matter how we look at it—"Carmen." But it is unique in its own way, as are "Pelléas" and "Boris Godunoff." Bizet, a born musico-dramatist, died prematurely. Russian opera, despite its strong local color, is an appendage of the International Romantic school, and although "Boris" occasionally reaches tremendous dramatic intensity, the Russians, unlike their French colleagues, are amateur craftsmen and all their stage works have to be doctored. Boris is the only one to remain afloat.

WELL, there we are. Against this list, full of limitations and qualifications, stands the unbroken lineage of Italian composers from Monteverdi to Puccini. We shall leave out the older composers, for opera before Mozart cannot be revived until we free ourselves of our exclusive addiction to Romantic dramaturgy. But while Spohr, Marschner, and Berlioz are forgotten as opera composers, their contemporaries, Rossini, Bellini, or Donizetti are alive and fully enjoyable, and the mid-nineteenth century Verdi is simply indestructible. In his last works, beginning with "Aida," Verdi unquestionably surpassed all his fellows as operatic composer and reaffirmed the great traditions of Monteverdi, Scarlatti, Mozart, and Rossini. While the well-informed music lover, or for that matter critic or composer, plunges his nose in his handkerchief at the very mention of the name of Puccini (let alone the lesser figures of Italian opera of the last generation or two), no one ought to be ashamed to proclaim his admiration for such an able theatrical composer. He has melody and he writes well for voices—a merit rare today when everything is sacrificed for the orchestra.

Music, of all the arts, is that which ages most rapidly. Since, unlike the other arts, it has no perpetual point of comparison with external phenomena, it lays great stress on fashion and convention. It is this constant renewal of musical taste which makes it difficult to resurrect any masterpiece if its tradition is broken by a generation or two. Still, while so many works seem decrepit or are maintained by false piety and snobbishness, the badly performed and familiar operas of the Italians as far back as Rossini gain in novelty with each day. You imagine that you have heard them a thousand times and that you know them by heart, and suddenly you discover new treasures of melody, new accents, new situations. But, of course, we must bear in mind that Italian opera—*opera*—is music designed exclusively from the viewpoint of the theatre; it does not lend itself to being broken into concert pieces as do the Wagnerian excerpts, and produces less effect in a concert than do more independent compositions. We do not belittle Wagner's musical powers, but his music—and that of all of his followers—completely distorts the esthetics of the lyric stage. According to Wagner, the "inner action"—*i.e.*, drama, passion, feelings—are the property of the *orchestra*, while words, gestures, and song constitute the "external action." As a consequence, the *Liebestod* makes a much better symphonic poem than it does an operatic scene.

All this amounts to a negation of the rights and requirements of the theatre. The ardent supporters of the symphonic opera would reply by pointing out the silliness of Italian libretti, and the cavatinas and arias which "arrest" the dramatic development. Looked at from the esthetics of the spoken theatre it is true that there is some reason for the age-old accusations directed against opera. Indeed, what is less natural than to see a conspirator counsel silence while singing at the top of his voice, or a grief stricken woman express her despair by cutting capers? But do people in ordinary life talk in blank verse as do Shakespeare's characters? It is a matter of stylistic propriety, and opera is not supposed to be realistic—quite the contrary. There can be real joy and grief in a cavatina or an aria, joy and grief that cannot be expressed in mere words, and the truth is that in spite of this seeming absurdity Italian libretti are written with a great deal of care and acumen, are often filled with charming verse, with poetry, a feeling for space, and excellent rhythm. They are quite superior, literarily speaking, to any of the French, German, or English texts, let alone the swollen monstrosities of Wagner.

PAUL HENRY LANG.


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# A Poet of Genuine Talent

*A MAN IN THE DIVIDED SEA. By Thomas Merton. Norfolk, Connecticut: New Directions.* 1946. 155 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by JOHN FREDERICK NIMS

WHEN the "Thirty Poems" of Thomas Merton, the young Trappist monk, were published last year, "the praise of good critics . . . ," declares the jacket of the present volume, "was so wholehearted that the edition was exhausted within a few months." Buyers disappointed then will be happy to find in this new collection those thirty poems, with more than fifty others.

Merton's career is a striking one: born in France, he studied there, at Cambridge, and at Columbia, where he was prominent as writer and editor. About seven years ago he was converted to Catholicism and not long afterwards entered the Trappist monastery in Kentucky. But his poetry, fortunately for his admirers, was not among the possessions he surrendered.

That poetry is of two well-defined sorts. The more secular early work is made up, at its best, of études which readers of poetry will recognize as in the manner of Wallace Stevens. Both cadence and idea are familiar:

> Make in their minds uncertain shapes of music,
> And slyly string their phony harps with twine.

Here is a pastel and dreamy world—rather thin and bloodless, with only the images alive, pinwheeling off in all directions. No human beings appear; it is the world of Ariadne, Calypso, Clytemnestra, and the "acropoli" (*sic*) of Athens. Merton's similes are often fresh and sharp: "dignified as rockets," "voices dry as shot," "smiles as dry as dice"; but he tends to overuse this talent—everything becomes as or like something else.

Quite different are the latter poems on the peace and joy of his vocation, written with a smoothness, a conviction, and a serenity astonishing in our disordered world. Rarely, perhaps never, have the innocence and wide-eyed excitement of the religious life been so well realized in verse. Everything to Merton has become Bethlehem and Jerusalem; all nature is a reminder of the breast-tightening presence of God. But the direct statement of these poems has been achieved at the expense of poetic quality: technically, everything is too bland and easy. One remembers Maritain's insistence that art "must have opposition and restraint . . . the more obstinate and rebellious the matter, the better will art . . . realize its own end." Compared with Donne or Hopkins, Merton is all milk and water; moonyness rather than fire. Perhaps his poetic shortcomings (there is no doubt of his spiritual success) are due to the rarefied ether of his love: the ineffability of much religious experience makes it poor matter for poetry. "The low sun has the color."

Nevertheless, Merton's admirers are almost right in asserting him the best Catholic poet since Francis Thompson (himself no giant among English poets). With Merton, modernity breaks at last into the innocuous parterres of that tradition: the fine music of Stevens, the tricks and questings of Joyce and the surrealists may now be accepted, under the aegis of Merton's piety, even by writers consecrated to dulness and convention. Therefore his mild but genuine talent is of importance: like his favorite saint he is a precursor, a voice crying in what has been too long a wilderness.

## LITERARY I.Q. ANSWERS

1. "Nocturne in a Deserted Brickyard," by Carl Sandburg. 2. "When You Are Old," by William Butler Yeats. 3. "All But Blind," by Walter de la Mare. 4. "At the Keyhole," by Walter de la Mare. 5. "John Gorham," by E. A. Robinson. 6. "Ars Poetica," by Archibald MacLeish. 7. "Ash Wednesday," by T. S. Eliot. 8. "God's World," by Edna St. Vincent Millay. 9. "Bewick Finzer," by E. A. Robinson. 10. "In the Servants' Quarters," by Thomas Hardy. 11. "Fog," by Carl Sandburg. 12. "Portrait of a Lady," by T. S. Eliot. 13. "Too Much Coffee," by E. A. Robinson. 14. "You, Andrew Marvell," by Archibald MacLeish. 15. "The Roman Road," by Thomas Hardy. 16. "The Lake Isle of Innisfree," by William Butler Yeats. 17. "The Dark-eyed Gentleman," by Thomas Hardy. 18. "The People, Yes," by Carl Sandburg. 19. "Immortal Autumn," by Archibald MacLeish. 20. "The Tuft of Flowers," by Robert Frost. 21. "What Lips My Lips Have Kissed," by Edna St. Vincent Millay. 22. "The Hollow Men," by T. S. Eliot. 23. "Among School Children," by William Butler Yeats. 24. "To A Common Prostitute," by Walt Whitman. 25. "The Chilterns, by Rupert Brooke. 26. "The Chinese Nightingale," by Vachel Lindsay. 27. "Reuben Bright," by E. A. Robinson. 28. "Pity Me Not," by Edna St. Vincent Millay. 29. "The Cow in Apple Time," by Robert Frost. 30. "An Old Story," by E. A. Robinson. 31. "I Heard a Fly Buzz When I Died," by Emily Dickinson. 32. "A Bird Came Down the Walk," by Emily Dickinson. 33. "Richard Cory," by E. A. Robinson.



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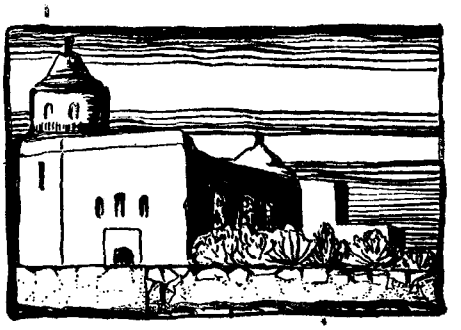
# Jim Bridger, in Part

*JIM BRIDGER. By Stanley Vestal. New York: William Morrow & Co. 1946. 300 pp. $3.50.*

Reviewed by DALE L. MORGAN



IT IS over twenty years since J. Cecil Alter assembled his biography of that preeminent mountain man James Bridger, an important work which for the first time developed the full pattern of Old Gabe's life and which was among the earliest of the serious biographies of the great personalities of the fur trade. Mr. Alter's book had the merit of being virtually a documentary treatment of Bridger's life, and the defect of misinterpreting some of the literature then available and not utilizing such key sources as the journal of Osborne Russell and the narrative of Isaac P. Rose. It has been used ever since as one of our standard authorities, but it has become increasingly unsatisfactory because much new research has extended the area of our knowledge and because it has been unavailable to the general public. A new work on Bridger for some years has been a pressing want, and Stanley Vestal has attempted to supply it.

Our painful conclusion, however, must be that we are still as badly in need of that new book as ever. What Mr. Vestal has given us is not the penetrating new study of Old Gabe we had every right to expect, but a pretentious popularization of Alter's biography. As a contribution to Western Americana, Mr. Vestal's book has an almost exclusively literary interest; the serious student will find in it nothing of much value except some investigations in Indian philosophy and an incomplete tabulation, from the National Archives, of the dates of Bridger's employment as a government scout at various times between 1858 and 1868. Perhaps we have no right to ask original research from one whose purposes are essentially literary, but it would seem that we may properly ask a popularizer to give attention to the relevant researches of the genuine scholars.

Some serious derelictions must be charged against Mr. Vestal, the more serious because of his specialization in the Western field. It is incredible, at this late date, to find a book about Jim Bridger written without reference to Russell's journal, our most reliable authority on the mountain men's activities between 1834 and 1838; and how is it possible to neglect Ferris's "Life in the Rocky Mountains"? It is slightly amazing, too, that a one-time biographer of Carson makes no real use of Carson's own story of his association with Old Gabe.

These criticisms can be extended indefinitely. For instance, Alpheus Favour has given us good reason to think that Bridger was born before 1804. The Stansbury Report and other sources (some of them cited by Mr. Vestal) show that Bridger began building his first fort in 1841, and the Joseph Williams narrative shows that the second of his three forts was in existence by 1842. The Fort Pierre letterbooks reveal that the Milk River affair occurred not in 1844 but the year before, and the Clyman and Clayton journals, in conjunction with the above letterbooks, show that Bridger was in California in 1844-45. George Stewart, and after him Bernard DeVoto, has called attention to the fact that Bridger actually was at his fort when the Donner Party passed in 1846. Documents proving the sale of Fort Bridger in 1854 by Jim's partner, Louis Vasquez, have been published in Utah by the Historical Records Survey. The Gove letters of 1858 supply important information about him which can be pursued in the government publications. The journals of John Owen have amplified the story of the activities of Bridger on the road to Montana he laid out in 1864.

Any number of errors in detail may be chalked up against Mr. Vestal, but it is hardly worth troubling to point them out in the light of this wholesale failure to utilize the standard sources. Indeed, no one who examines Mr. Vestal's bibliography can have any confidence that he himself consulted even the sources that he lists; its internal evidence shows that except for minor additions, principally a list of his own books, it is simply an alphabetizing of the greater part of Alter's somewhat scrambled bibliography.

Mr. Vestal is a prolific writer, but it would seem to be time to raise the question whether more solid research should not go into his books. As a popularization of Alter's twenty-one-year-old work, his new production is colorful and spirited. He feels at home with the mountain men, has a lively interest in them, and enjoys writing about them. One who is content to accept his book on that basis may have a good time with it. But the book will be forgotten as soon as someone brings out the biography of Bridger we are all waiting for. There doesn't seem to be any good reason why Mr. Vestal should have left that book for someone else to write.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| COMPOSITION, PERFORMER, ALBUM NUMBER, NUMBER OF RECORDS | ENGINEERING | | REMARKS |
|---|---|---|---|
| | *Recording Technique* | *Surface* | |
| PROKOFIEFF, QUARTET NO. 2, OP. 92 (1942). Gordon String Quartet. Concert Hall A1 (3 *plastic*) *Album not available separately.* | Splendid wide range recording, compares well with high vertical-cut standards of original recording (*see below*). Vinylite claimed harder than Victor's; some crackling. Highs seem slightly "jacked up," not enough to need special filter. | AA *plastic* | First release of limited edition of 12-album group. (*Concert Hall Society, 250 W. 57th St., N. Y. 19*). A good quartet centered on Caucasian folksongs, beautifully played by the reconstituted Gordon group. |

## SNOBBERY, LIMITED?

A NEW company in the classical field, Concert Hall Society (see above) is making several innovations, any one of which is interesting news. On the engineering side, Concert Hall records, pressed on top quality vinylite, are originally vertical-cut, on transcription; ten accurate lateral-cut copies are simultaneously recorded and from each is made a master, with no further in-between stages. Each master presses no more than a few hundred records, thus maintaining unusually high quality. The records are sold by subscription, at a price that is slightly above present levels for de luxe vinylites. Carrying the "society" idea a step farther, the company will not sell the subscription albums separately, but only in the complete series. The musical policy of Concert Hall is almost too good to be true: a list of works from various periods none of them recorded before, with a gratifying emphasis on the contemporary—Stravinsky, Bartok, Prokofieff, Samuel Barber, Copland. In addition the company follows the excellent plan of choosing its broad musical program first, then finding the best available artists for the music. All this is, needless to say, resolutely opposed to the standard star system, and the endless repeat recordings of repertory war horses.

But beyond the details of music and engineering, Concert Hall's appearance points up a situation that I find increasingly distressing — a growing emphasis on the best seller mass production idea as an *ethical principle*, a matter of right and wrong. The availability of Concert Hall's new records is at present limited and is so calculated. The cost is high; otherwise the records could not be available at all. And yet on this ground alone the company has been rather sourly accused of snobbishness.

But what kind of silly argument is this! Snobbery is an attitude, not a procedure.

It is one thing to argue that to bring music to the people, mass radio and mass recording must limit themselves to relatively standardized items (though I do not even agree with this). But to suggest, as this criticism may, that anything less than mass production in the arts is somehow morally wrong is a horrible fallacy. Cultural democracy is a fine thing; music should not be kept from the people. But, as in religious freedom, how can we question the clear right of a minority to hear, play, manufacture, buy, or broadcast any music it may wish, without interference? Nor is this any tempest in a teapot. I've had enough personal experience in broadcasting music supposedly in the non-mass category to know what kind of moral pressure (quite aside from business considerations) can be brought to bear against it. The People know what they want; in a democracy the People's voice must be heard, says radio. It is wrong, you see, to broadcast Bach, or Palestrina, because it isn't what the People want. Phew!

The root of the trouble is very simple. To like, to listen to, perform, or record out-of-the-way music is not snobbish because the plain fact is that virtually any music worth its salt can, under the right circumstances, appeal to anyone. There is no such thing as "limited appeal," except in the practical way that Fords—and Concert Hall records—are of limited availability, right now. I have seen far too many musical illiterates eat up supposed ultra-highbrow music with the greatest of relish (they didn't know it was highbrow) not to be entirely convinced —that in great music itself is the greatest cultural democracy of all.

EDWARD TATNALL CANBY.



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# Life in India

*THE LAND AND THE WELL. By Hilder Wernher with Huthi Singh. New York: John Day. 1946 243 pp. $2.75.*

Reviewed by Pfc. Arthur C. Fields

AT a time when India is making international headlines, and when understanding the habits and customs of foreign countries is assuming an importance far beyond that which it has ever held, it is a relief to come across such a book as "The Land and the Well," a story of the home life of a typical Indian family.

Instead of attempting to chronicle the attempts of Ghandi or Jinnah to ascend to leadership, Miss Wernher concerns herself with the common people—slaves to the whims of plagues, famines, and drought, sacrificing everything for the farm, the crops, the all-important land. Although restricted by the confines of the caste system, these people still try to live as normal human beings and wish for the days of "Ram Raj . . . under whom there were food and justice for everybody, to whom the poorest could go for hearing and help."

Carefully described are the elaborate wedding and death ceremonies, the trial systems, and holidays such as Holi, when for two days even untouchables are on an equal status with kings. As the author points out, "If this spirit were allowed to pervade every realm of life the whole year round . . . India could again become an earthly paradise."

Perhaps of greatest interest to the Western reader is the insight the author has into the workings of local and family government. Unfair tax systems and their terrible consequences are adequately covered, obligations—such as dowries and entertainment of the theatrical players—are explained, and the inner workings of the family council, perhaps the most important government of all, are set forth in detail.

Yet the advantages of this book are somewhat lost in the weak plot structure that is characteristic of such local color stories. Clinging desperately to the main theme—the building of an irrigation well for the family plot of land—the writer finds it hard to advance the action because of the necessity of describing the customs and ceremonies in such detail.

Nevertheless, this is a timely book on a timely subject. For a country that has been so shrouded in mystery any book is welcome that helps to lift the encompassing veils


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So much to learn by dint of blunders! blunders!
At times possessed of madcap frolic
And impish mischief diabolic.
Again, demure, with wishful eyes
In which a muted wisdom lies.
Low down on earth you start from scratch,
The vagaries of youth to hatch:
With puppy voice to bark defiance
At bugs and birds and striding giants:
To pounce in furious ado
And wrestle fiercely with a shoe;
To dig at large and wreck creation
With an atomic devastation.
The while, by canine nature's laws
You grow to the promise of your paws.
O'ersoon to be a dog, sedate,
Experienced to discriminate
Between the false and true—contented
With daily routine regimented,
And life not all a circumstance
Of blithe adventure and romance.
Eat, sleep, and play. Enjoy reprieve
In this your world of make-believe.

EDWIN L. SABIN.


"TRY again, boys, and give it the human touch!"
Rumbles the writers' ogre from his den.
Murder's a human touch, and love, but not too much:
Depravity preserves the child in men.
Like children, full-mouthed, dropping crumbs, we go:
A frisking spaniel heralds our oncoming.
The walls fall down far short of Jericho,
And all the way we hear Death's distant drumming.
And fear is in us as a thunder's deep
Foreboding: though our swiftest traffic keep
But pace with flight of worms, we mind as trulls
How carrion glistens in a flight of gulls!

—*from*

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* * *

Pierce Butler, of Natchez, Mississippi, has an inquiry:

In the long ago I used to recite a set of verses called "Dryburg Abbey." They were probably not to be counted as poetry, being merely a sonorous gathering of the names of Scott's people whose forms join in his funeral procession. But they were significant to me. Now I can recall only a scrap here and there—

Robert B. Sears, reference assistant in the library at Union College, Schenectady, N. Y., writes:

Admirers of Thomas Paine will be glad to know that his birthplace, Thetford, England, now has a memorial to its most illustrious son.

Members of an Eighth Air Force Heavy Bombardment Group, stationed near Thetford during World War II, discovered that this Norfolk village contained no visible evidence that Thomas Paine ever existed.

There is no stone in the local cemetery, for the location of Paine's grave is a mystery. The Church of England, naturally enough, does not memorialize anti-clericals; so there was no tablet in the parish chapel. And none of the citizens had ever got around to putting up a monument to the leading American revolutionary, even if he was born in Thetford.

But the men of a heavy bomb group deemed it fitting, and did something about it. They chipped in to pay for a modest bronze plaque, which now appears on the walls of a house on the High Street, probably near the birthplace of Paine. I do not know which bomb group did this, for its identifying number does not appear on the tablet; it was erected during the war, and for security reasons this information could not be placed thereon. Unfortunately, although I have seen the plaque, I do not have the text of the legend on it.

Among your readers, there is probably some one who can furnish more information about the only monument to Thomas Paine in his home town.

* * *

Several people have recommended to Kenneth Porter (with reference to the earliest references to the atomic bomb) a book I discussed in this column several summers ago. But the recent death of H. G. Wells has made all his work of especial interest, and I thank Walter H. Zeydel of Washington, D. C., for also writing me. Earle Brauer, first lieutenant in the Medical Corps, at Fitzsimmons General Hospital in Denver, Colorado, suggests another book, "Wings Over Europe" (1935 edition published by Samuel French), a play in three acts by Robert Nichols and Maurice Browne, recently being serialized in the newspaper *PM*'s Sunday picture news. Of the Wells book, and another matter, W. G. Gaffney of Brooklyn says:

I have a kind of half-memory that maybe you have mentioned it before; but if you haven't, you must surely tell your correspondent who wanted literary references to atom warfare about Wells's "The World Set Free." One of the principal points about *his* unstable-synthetic element was that both its explosiveness and its radioactivity were, as I recall, permanent, so that they rendered every area where they had fallen forever uninhabitable.

And speaking of atom warfare, have you yet had pointed out to you, or found for yourself, the prophetic-appearing passage in II Peter 3: 10?

* * *

Laurence Perrine of Dallas, Texas, has an inquiry:

I wonder if you or any of your readers knows the authorship of a poem I read a few years ago somewhere (but have completely forgotten where) called "The Strong Swimmer." I have tried Granger's *Index to Poetry and Recitations*, and the *Reader's Guide*, without success. In the latter, when I had already decided to write you if otherwise unsuccessful, I found that you yourself had written a poem by that title, but on looking it up, I found it not the one I was seeking. The one I am seeking describes the exultation of the strong swimmer as he draws himself out of the water, and his disregard of, and indifference to, those who have not fared so successfully in the race.

Black Bothwell on his charger black,
And pale Habakkuk Mucklewrath,
Who cried, "God's will be dune."

Can you, or any of your readers, tell me more? Sir Walter made many of these figures *live* as few writers can do.

You can write him on Star Route 1, Natchez. He is within a few miles of old plantations called "Montrose," "Woodstock," and "Sligo."



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If my memory and understanding serve me right, the poem referred by implication to all successful competitors in a competitive system. I should certainly appreciate it if you could supply me with any information which might help me to locate this poem.

* * *

All those interested in Scientific Fiction should be sure not to miss the article in *Harper's* by the grandson of Sabine Baring-Gould (1834-1924), Vicar of Lew-Trenchard and a famous "squarson" (squire and parson), the list of whose books, according to Miriam Allen DeFord, "is exhausting." His "The Book of Were-Wolves," "Historic Survivals," and "Curious Myths of the Middle Ages" indicate one range of his interests. As probably the greatest collector of scientific fiction in the United States, his grandson is now carrying on. And, speaking of similarity in titles, examples of which Earle Walbridge was giving us a little while ago, S. Baring-Gould wrote a work of fiction in 1899 called "The Crock of Gold." Page James Stephens!

* * *

In case you're interested, all summer we have been raising three kittens. Now the female referred to below has departed for an education at Northampton, Mass., at a girls' school; the mother is mousing for the local grocer; one of the boy kittens goes to our Jamaican maid, and the other to a lady in Rockport. They have, however, been a lot of fun.

### THE LITTLE CATS

Our mackerel cat
Has three kittens.
The girl one sat
With white mittens
Down in the hall.
The grandfather clock
Bonged. The kitten
Shied at the shock.

Pounce, bounce,
Come her two brothers.
There were once
Three others.
We don't surmise
Who their sire is.
Their round eyes
Are all iris.

They sleep in a ball.
They scuffle and scamper.
Once they lived all
By the clothes-hamper.
Of their mother they know
They can't boss her.
They sit in a row
For the milk saucer.

They think a brown marble
Is a mouse.
They hop up stairs
And lurk through the house.
Pretentious books
By many are written.
I prefer the looks
Of a high-tail kitten.

WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT.


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(Continued on page 42)



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# PERSONALS

(Continued from page 41)

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# DOUBLE-CROSTIC NO. 657

By Elizabeth S. Kingsley

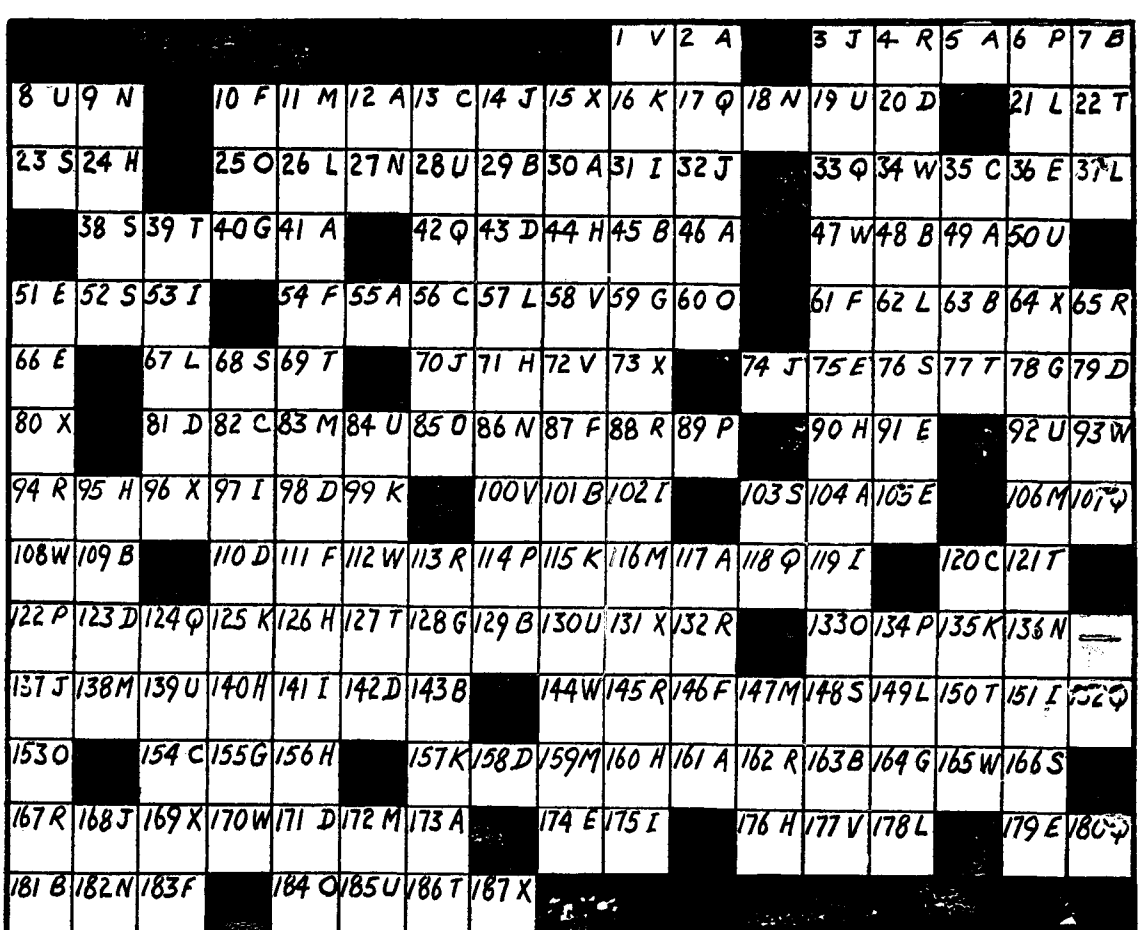
| DEFINITIONS | WORDS |
|---|---|
| A. Sobriquet of Father Joseph, adviser of Cardinal Richelieu and diplomat (English; 2 wds.; with "His"). | 5 104 55 173 49 12 117 2 161 46 30 41 |
| B. English printer, founder of Chiswick Press, first to print India-paper editions, etc. (1767-1840). | 45 163 7 109 143 29 101 129 48 63 181 |
| C. Leatherworker in India, of low social caste. | 56 82 154 13 120 35 |
| D. Not thoroughly wet; not covered by water. | 79 123 110 20 158 142 81 43 171 98 |
| E. Kind of sausage in a bag of tripe, famous among Dutch of New Amsterdam and still known in New Jersey. | 91 174 36 66 75 51 179 105 |
| F. To flog or cudgel. | 61 54 87 146 183 10 111 |
| G. In a living organism, as a man, animal, or plant (Latin; 2 wds.). | 164 155 40 128 59 78 |
| H. Conelike. | 24 176 160 90 95 140 126 44 71 156 |
| I. Lively Spanish or S. American dance for two, with castanets, triple rhythm. | 175 141 53 102 31 97 119 151 |
| J. Restoration to fullness or sufficiency. | 137 3 32 14 74 168 70 |
| K. A stableman. | 115 99 16 135 125 157 |
| L. French composer and conductor (Covent Garden; U.S., etc.; 1853-1929). | 26 178 21 37 67 149 57 62 |

| DEFINITIONS | WORDS |
|---|---|
| M. To grow gradually less (2 wds.). | 172 83 116 138 147 11 106 159 |
| N. One who makes or fits handles. | 9 182 136 18 27 86 |
| O. Obliterates; blots out. | 85 184 25 133 60 153 |
| P. English scientist and man of letters (1859-1939). | 134 114 6 122 89 |
| Q. The literary "age" of Queen Anne of England. | 17 180 33 152 42 124 107 118 |
| R. V. P. of the U. S., 1893-97. | 162 132 65 167 113 4 94 145 88 |
| S. Long knife or short sabre without a cross piece, common among Moslems. | 23 103 76 52 166 38 148 68 |
| T. A dominant people of Babylonia; pertaining to occult lore. | 186 77 39 127 69 150 22 121 |
| U. Rude, boisterous diversion or sport. | 92 19 28 8 130 84 139 185 50 |
| V. A long-tailed lemur of Madagascar. | 100 72 1 177 58 |
| W. Famous poem by W. E. Henley. | 170 165 112 34 144 47 93 108 |
| X. A spectre; an apparition. | 169 187 64 73 15 96 131 80 |

## DIRECTIONS

*To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-odd words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square of the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Read up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.*

*When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (second edition).*




Solution of last week's Double-Crostic will be found on page 33 of this issue.

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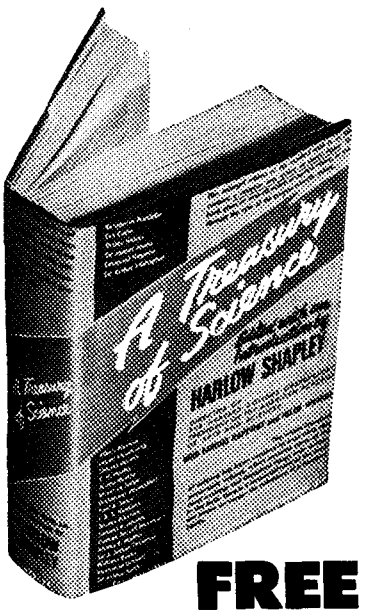


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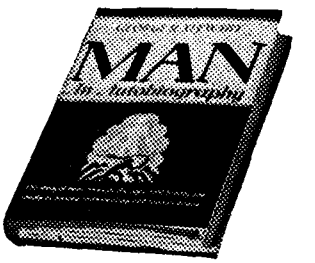


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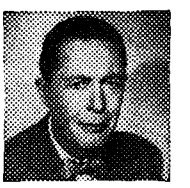

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